



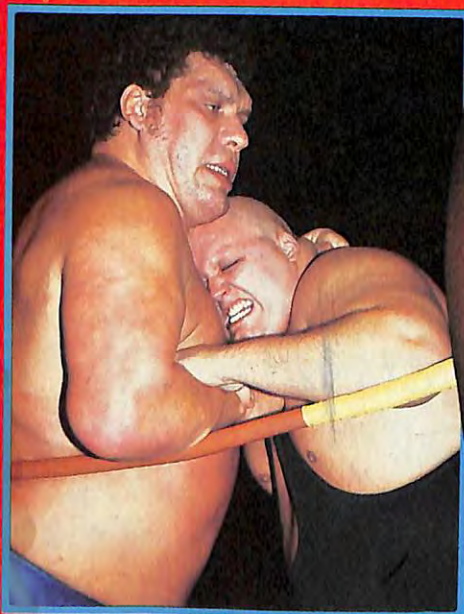
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ARE THE VON ERICHS MAKING
COUSIN LANCE THEIR FALL GUY?

47727 April 1986
\$1.75 / \$2.25 Canada

Wrestling

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But The Feud Rages On:
**DUSTY RHODES
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CANNOT SURVIVE '86!**



**Andre's Battle Plan:
SLAY TWO GIANTS
TO CAPTURE A WEASEL**

**BILL WATTS:
"HULK HOGAN COULDN'T
LAST FIVE MINUTES
IN A MID-SOUTH MATCH!"**

**Ready For The Hall Of Fame:
THE AWA'S FUTURE
IS IN SCOTT HALL'S HANDS!**



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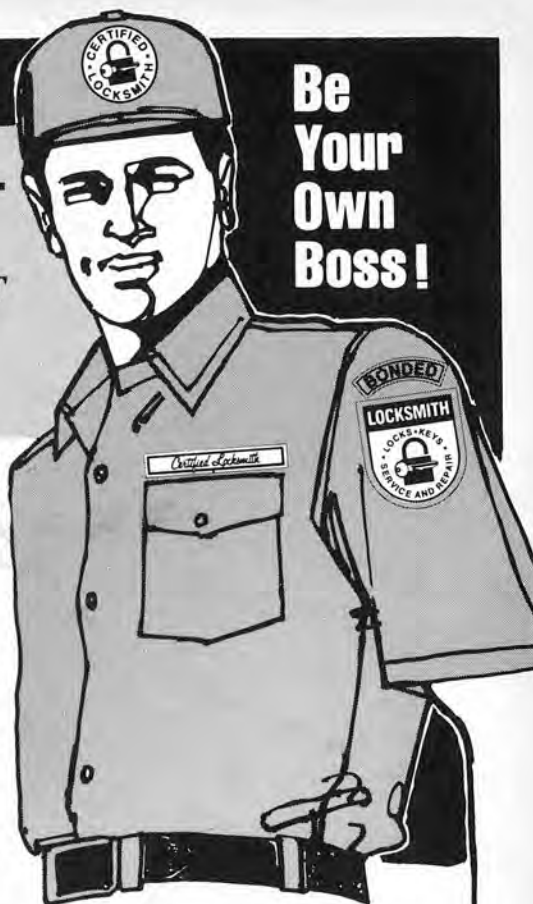
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B. A. Deberry Littleton, Colorado

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Sam Walker Prichard, Alabama



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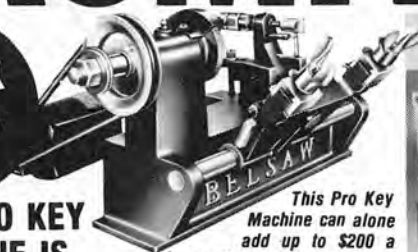
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MACHO MEN HAVE MORE FUN

Women are not excited by men who are skeletons. They like men of form and substance. They like men who look good in their clothes and out. They like men who look like men. If you are one of those who knows this and have been trying in vain to do something about it, this is your lucky day. Your search is ended. Your body is about to embark on a trip to its ideal shape and form. *ShapeUp* is here to shape you up... and we mean it sincerely. You are about to gain weight... and not just flab, but the right amount in the right places. You'll see!

SKINNY ISN'T ATTRACTIVE

If you don't think so, just watch what turns women's heads on the beach. They get turned on by well-built guys. They're the ones with the prettiest girls. It's a rare fellow who doesn't want to look good in his clothes and is happy with a skinny frame, who has not envied men who weighed a little more, had a better appetite and generally displayed a physical fitness that spoke of health and well-being. True, while doctors and nutrition specialists warn against being fat, very little is said about the equal or greater evils of being underweight. So there's more to it than cosmetic aspects. Skinny is not only unattractive. It is also unhealthy. Gaining weight could mean gaining health for you.

GAIN STAMINA AND SELF-CONFIDENCE TOO.

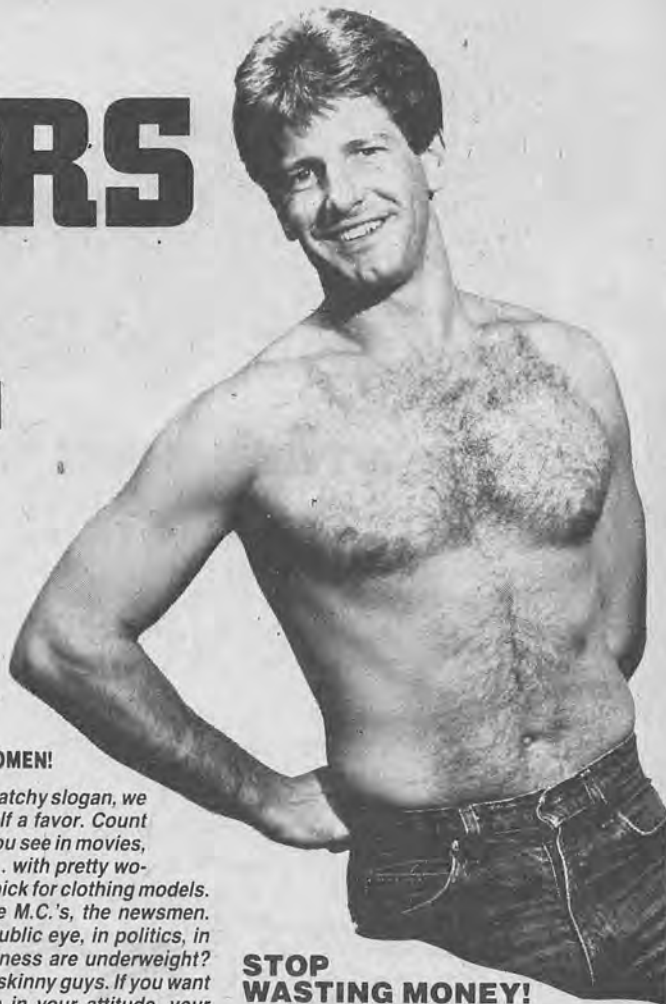
Skinny men are not great lovers. That's a known fact. Add a few pounds and you'll be amazed how it will improve your love-life. Women know this and are conscious of the fact that skinny men can't go the distance. The race is to the strong, the saying goes. And the fellow who is handsomest doesn't look like a stand-in for the family skeleton. Many a man found that gaining a few more pounds has helped him overcome chronic illness, major or minor. Many a doctor has prescribed gaining weight. But so little is publicized about skinny men. The great amount of publicity given to coronary problems has brought the bulk of weight attention to those men who weigh too much. Men who weigh too little never really get equal time. But their problem is no less serious.

GAIN WEIGHT! GAIN WOMEN!

*If you think that's just a catchy slogan, we hope you will do yourself a favor. Count how many skinny men you see in movies, or on TV or anywhere... with pretty women. Notice whom they pick for clothing models. See the announcers, the M.C.'s, the newsmen. How many men in the public eye, in politics, in leadership roles in business are underweight? Not even astronauts are skinny guys. If you want to experience a change in your attitude, your business progress, your lifestyle, see what 5, 10, 15 pounds can do for you. See how it adds to your personal esteem, your confidence and, best of all, your well-being. Your day will come... and thank your lucky stars, it's within sight with *ShapeUp* working for you.*

LOOK BETTER AND FEEL BETTER WHILE YOU GAIN

In these times when women are free to express themselves and pick and choose their men, you don't need a handicap... especially when it's so easy to put yourself in the forefront of competition. Why not look your best? And you will if you feel your best. And you'll feel your best when you gain the kind of nutrition that builds your body to its highest potential. Everyone knows that a healthy body brings a healthy mind and the kind of outlook that makes you want to kick up your heels... and go out and lick the world. Yes, with *ShapeUp*, you give yourself a super-lift of confidence, built into its wondrous formula, that's compounded to perk you up and give you a winning attitude.



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INSIDE

Wrestling

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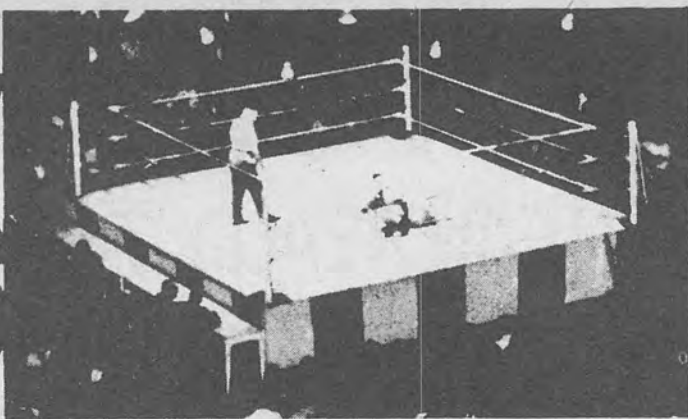
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SINCERELY YOURS

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BLESSING IN DISGUISE

In response to your article on whether The Road Warriors were getting too big for the AWA (February 1986), the answer is a definite "yes."

When the AWA promotion decides to reverse two decisions in favor of their favorite puppet, Rick Martel, and then go as far as to all-out lie and proclaim that all decisions by the referee are final—*after* the Warriors were robbed by Steve Regal and Jim Garvin with help from Michael Hayes and Buddy Roberts . . . well, it would seem asinine for Paul Ellering to keep his Legion of Doom employed by such an absurd organization as the AWA.

After Hawk and Animal are through getting revenge on four choice punks in the AWA, they will head to the NWA and send three Russians back to Moscow. And after they have accomplished this, they will set their sights on the NWA World tag team title.

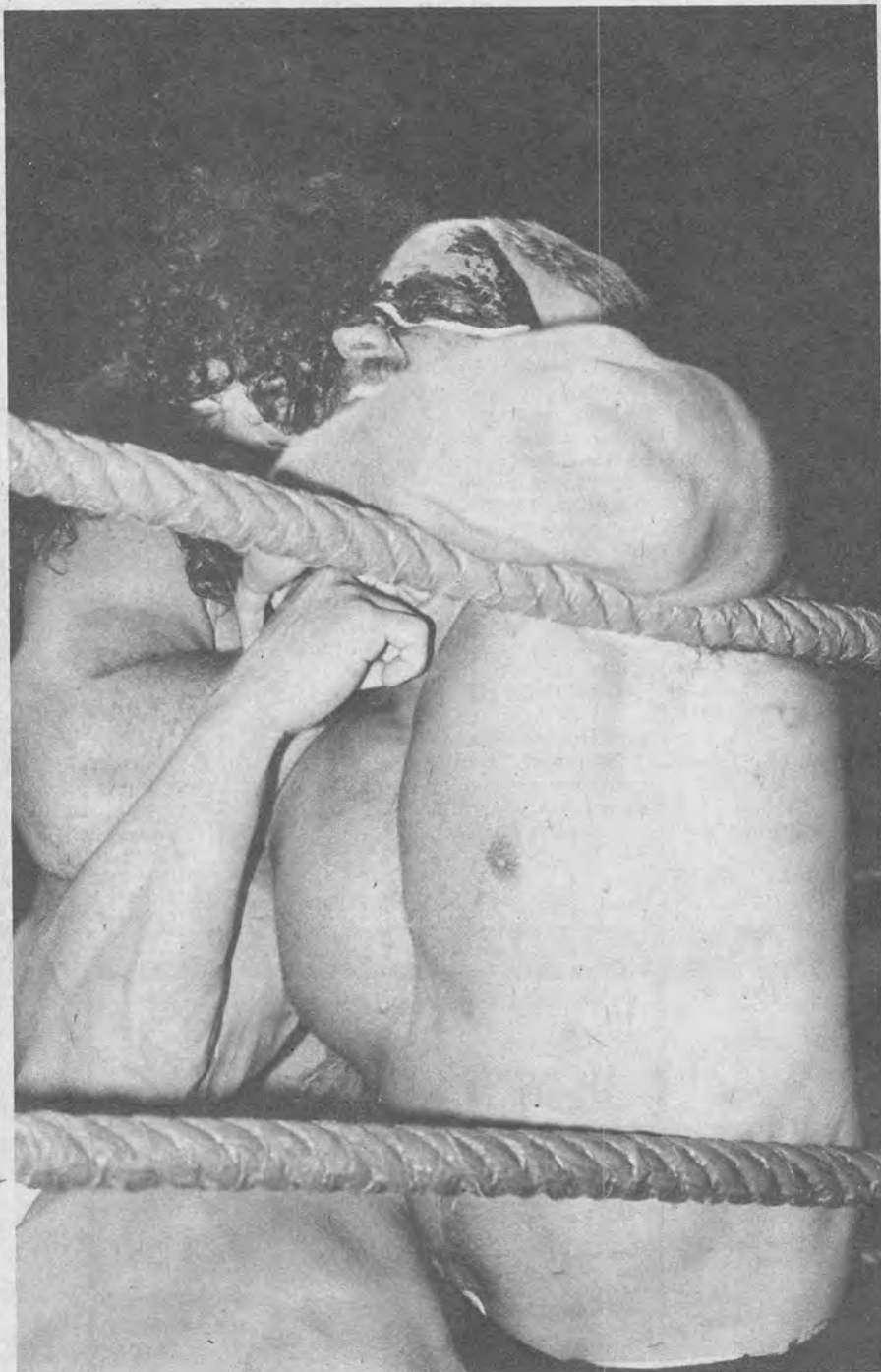
So in short, Stanley Blackburn and all his stooges have just given the Warriors a good excuse to get out of an organization that is more annoying than the WWF. And that's a hard act to follow.

BILL E. HARDER
Washington, IN

FIRE-BREATHING DRAGON

I bought the January 1986 issue of *Inside Wrestling* to read "Rick Steamboat vs. Magnificent Muraco: The Volcano Rumbles! Will This Feud Erupt Into Uncontrollable Violence?"

The feud between Steamboat and Muraco may be just as exciting as the
(Continued on page 49)



Jim Garvin chokes Road Warrior Hawk along the ropes. Reader Bill E. Harder notes that losing the AWA tag team belts to Garvin and Steve Regal might benefit the Warriors in that it gives them the freedom to wrestle wherever and against whomever they want.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Peter
King

Editor-in-Chief

The cover of this month's Pro Wrestling Illustrated features a picture of Wendi Richter with the headline "Is Wendi Richter More Popular Than Hulk Hogan?" She may well be, at least as far as the fans are concerned. But as far as WWF kingpin Vince McMahon is concerned, Wendi is very unpopular. You see, a few days after we wrote the story, only weeks after Wendi had lost her woman's title to Fabulous Moolah, McMahon fired her.

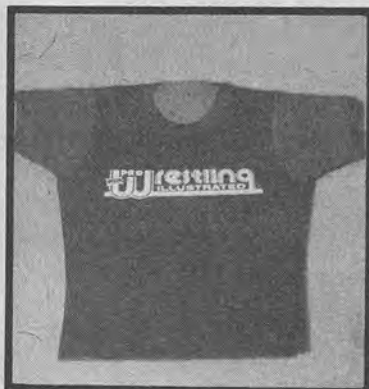
WWF sources told us that Richter was let go because "she was tough to work with." But somehow this doesn't ring true. After all, Richter was one of the WWF's top attractions. In many cities, she was an even bigger draw than Hogan. Certainly a man with Vince McMahon's superb promotional sense would not fire someone because of personality differences.

Then why did Vince McMahon fire Wendi Richter? I've got my own theory.

For the WWF to be successful, no one can be bigger than Hulk Hogan. Hogan is the locomotive pulling the entire WWF gravy train. Everything must begin and end with Hulk Hogan. In 1985, the amount of merchandise money brought in by Hulk Hogan was staggering. And since the WWF seems to spend money as fast as it makes it, it cannot survive without this income. The fans see the WWF as Hogan and Savage and Richter and Santana and the rest, but the WWF sees itself as Hogan and no one else. Hulk Hogan is the unquestioned king of the WWF. And there is no room for a queen.

I believe McMahon fired Richter because she was becoming too popular. The PWI story is a prime example; it marked the first time a woman had ever appeared on the cover of the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine. The cover may have been the last straw for McMahon. Was it a coincidence that Richter was canned just days after we went to press? I think not. The PWI story proves that Wendi Richter was at the height of her popularity. Ironically, this may be what got her fired.

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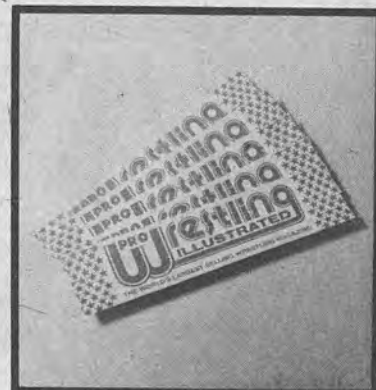
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'TOP SECRET'

Behind the Dressing Room Door

**by Stu
Saks**

DAVID SAMMARTINO NEVER asked for more from his sport than what he felt he deserved. Before he turned professional in 1980, there were promoters who promised him stardom if he would agree to bring his surname to their area. David wasn't interested. He knew that there was no such thing in professional athletics as gifts of stardom. He learned by living with a man by the name of Bruno Sammartino that stardom is something that is paid for with broken noses, cracked ribs, and cauliflower ears.

He didn't want a title match in his first professional match. He didn't want any special favors at all. He would not take advantage of his father's years of suffering. David made his professional debut in Puerto Rico where he did a lot of suffering on his own. He has been around a bit in the succeeding years and has continued to suffer. But, until now, he has never complained. "I knew more than anybody what I was getting myself into when I decided to be a pro wrestler," he told me following a match at the Tropicana Hotel in Atlantic City. "As far as I was concerned, the tougher things were, the better. I was very conscious of the critics who said I would have an easy time of it because I was Bruno Sammartino's son."

Sammartino was readying himself for a shower following a match in which he teamed with Sgt. Slaughter that was taped for future airplay on ESPN when I spoke to him about his move from out of the WWF, a move that was surprising to everyone but the powerfully built young wrestler. Presently, he is in the AWA, but he says he is not sure if he

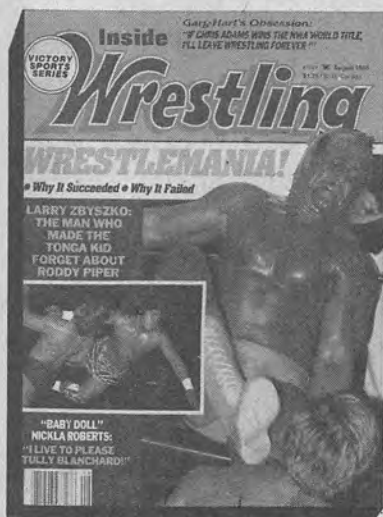
(Continued on page 62)

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THIS MAGAZINE GOES on sale the second week of February. That's six weeks into the new year, which should allow plenty of time for all of us to break most of the resolutions we made on New Year's Eve.

I don't know who first came up with the idea of making New Year's resolutions, but my guess is that she was a Jewish mother. Now don't start writing nasty letters to me, because I'm not making any ethnic judgment here—being a Jewish mother has nothing whatsoever to do with being Jewish. It has to do with guilt.

And that's what New Year's resolutions seem to do: They saddle people with subtle guilt. Because 98 percent of the people who make them never keep them. The other two percent don't make resolutions, but lie and say they did; they get to feel that subtle guilt, too, from having bent the truth a bit for the sake of the season.

So about four or five weeks into the new year, people's resolutions start falling by the wayside. The aggregate level of guilt in the general population begins to rise as the aggregate number of promises made to the self and kept begins to plummet. Pretty soon, just about everyone has a tiny little stash of guilt tucked away in the unconscious.

A Jewish mother would be proud.

Me? I'm guilty enough from having a column called "On The Road" and not having truly written about my experiences on the road since the January 1985 edition of *Inside Wrestling*. But then again, I can't remember the last time that Stu Saks went behind a dressing room door, so I suppose in some small way I'm vindicated.

With that said, and with the realization that as I type these words the descent of the lighted apple in Times Square—and the onslaught of 1986—is only days away, I'd like to state for the record these New Year's resolutions:

I WILL attempt to write about my travels in "On The Road" at least once in 1986.

I WILL NOT make fun of Bill Apter's bald spot while watching "Pro Wrestling Illustrated Scouting Report" on weekends on WTBS, nor will I suggest that the segments should be aired on TV's *Bloopers And Practical Jokes*.

I WILL NOT purchase any Hulk Hogan headbands, T-shirts, beer mugs, bedsheets, workout kits, drinking glasses, bubblegum cards, sweat suits, beach towels, foam fingers, wristwatches, dolls, videocassettes, stickers, records, bookmarks, school supplies, wrestling rings, posters, painters' caps, biographies, balloons, pajamas, or puzzles.

NEITHER WILL I purchase any Sgt. Slaughter albums, Greg Gagne dolls, Freebird satin jackets, wrestling board games, wrestling strategy games, Jesse Ventura pic-

ON THE ROAD

with
CRAIG PETERS

ture discs, Baron Von Raschke dolls, or wrestling videocassettes.

I WILL, however, accept freebies on any of the above items if anyone would care to send them to me (VHS on videos, please).

I WILL try to watch more tapes of more matches from the areas of the country I don't usually see in my weekly wrestling viewing.

I WILL hope for Kendall Windham to gain weight and Adrian Adonis to lose it, for Billy Jack Haynes to stop traveling and the Von Erichs to start, and for the

WWF area to get less recognition and the Mid-South area to get more.



Adonis—too much; Windham—not quite enough.

I WILL attempt to figure out why six-man tag teams only have three members.

I WILL CEASE making fun of the WWF—but only when the WWF ceases to make fun of the fans to whom it is so condescending.

I WILL CEASE making fun of the World Class area—but only when the World Class area ceases to have Kevin Von Erich vs. Chris Adams as a main event on most of its cards.

I WILL CEASE making fun of the NWA—but only when the NWA adopts a set of rules for the sport that prevents such farces as the Starrcade '85 non-decision.

I WILL CEASE making fun of the AWA—but only when the AWA signs half a dozen new wrestlers with average ages under 45.

These are my New Year's resolutions for 1986. If I can keep just one of them this year, maybe I won't feel so guilty. But I doubt it. □

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NAMES MAKI

New Year's Eve was still two days away, but that didn't stop the residents of Borger, Texas, from whooping it up in the streets after their most famous and ferocious son, **Stan "The Lariat" Hansen**, ran roughshod over **Rick Martel** to capture the AWA World heavyweight championship.

Martel, who had taken a tremendous beating from Hansen four days earlier in St. Paul, came into the ring with a back injury that doctors now say should have forced the bout's cancellation. Martel chose to wrestle with the handicap rather than disappoint the fans at the Brendan Byrne Meadowlands Arena. Hansen, quite naturally,



STAN HANSEN

showed no compassion. He directed his attack at Martel's injury, finally turning him over for a Boston crab (or what he calls the "Brazos Valley back-breaker"). Martel, who had only submitted two times during his entire career—both in his rookie year—had to relinquish the bout or risk permanent injury. He had held the AWA title since May 13, 1984, when he defeated **Jumbo Tsuruta**.

Receiving treatment in the dressing

room, Martel tried to deny that his back injury had anything to do with the loss. "I was beaten by a better man tonight," he said. Everybody present showed respect for his graciousness, but few people believed him.

Hansen adds the AWA World championship to his Pacific heavyweight title and the Pacific tag team title he holds with **Ted DiBiase**. "Guess I'll have to give somethin' up," he piped between gulps of champagne in the winner's dressing room. "Wonder which one it'll be?" he asked reporters with a sly wink.

History was almost made again on that Meadowlands card when **Dusty Rhodes** apparently pinned **Ric Flair** to capture the NWA belt. However, referee **Dick Woherle**, who was knocked out earlier, returned to disqualify Dusty for throwing Flair over the top rope.

Where's the beef? Down in Texas with manager **Gary Hart**. Hart's current stable includes **One Man Gang** (467 pounds), **Kareem Muhammad** (460 pounds), **Big Bubba** (320



GARY HART



JIM & ELMER

pounds), and **Bruiser Brody** (the runt of the litter, weighing a slender 302).

Capt. Lou Albano will shuck his shoes to advise **Hillbilly Jim**, **Uncle Elmer**, and the recently arrived **Cousin Luke**. Albano said that his first goal will be to refine the Hillbillies' raw strength into effective wrestling holds. . . . **Junkyard Dog** and **Terry Funk** shared the battle royal spoils when they soared over the top rope at the same time at the Nassau Coliseum.

The Nightmare's car trouble became a bad dream for **Eddie Gilbert**



DIBIASE & WILLIAMS

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

on the night of their scheduled Mid-South tag team title defense against **Steve Williams** and **Ted DiBiase**. With Gilbert's partner, Nightmare, stranded on the side of the highway, **Dick Murdoch** came in as a replacement and was promptly pinned by **Ted DiBiase** for the title ... **Jerry Lawler** defeated **Tony Falk** in a match where the loser got diapered. Can't wait to see those pictures.

On a recently televised installment of Mid-Atlantic wrestling, **Tully Blanchard** asked his valet **Baby Doll**



MAGNUM T.A.

who had already submitted. Dusty, Tully, and Baby Doll congregated around the ring. Dusty and Tully entered the ring, then Tully and Flair began to beat up Dusty. Flair clamped a figure-four on "The American Dream," and Tully hurled punches at his arms. Baby Doll then jumped Tully, and was assisted by **Magnum T.A.**! Dusty and Baby Doll left the ring area together, and now Baby Doll says she will no longer tolerate Tully's treatment. Perhaps Baby Doll's 30 days with Dusty this past Summer were not as intolerable for her as we all believed them to be.

In a recent World Class area development, **The Missing Link** scored a defeat over **Jack Victory**. No sooner was his hand raised than **Rick Rude** and **Percy Pringle** raced into the ring to play taps on his head. The reason: A few days earlier, Link was teamed with the Pringle-managed **Kabuki** in a bout against **Scott Casey** and **Iceman Parsons**. In the middle of the match, Kabuki decided that **Sunshine** is more interesting than either of his opponents and zeroes in on her. The Link pounces on Kabuki, saving Sunshine,

and earning the wrath of Pringle and Rude. Now, in the middle of his beating, Sunshine—who else—rallies to the Link's side, packing an aerosol can of an indeterminate substance. Whatever it was, it succeeded in emptying the ring of Pringle and Rude. Sunshine and Link will work together in the future.

Those silly little WWF dolls of **Hulk Hogan**, **Jimmy Snuka**, **Iron Sheik**, **John Studd**, etc. number over three million in sales, according to a published report. That's a \$20 million gross for those without calculators. AWA dolls of **The Road Warriors**,



BABY DOLL

where she had been for the last couple of days. Baby Doll said, "You know where I was. I was in Acapulco. You gave me the ticket yourself." Blanchard denied ever doing so. Baby Doll persisted. "Yes you did. **J.J. Dillon** gave me the ticket and said it was from you." Dillon is called in and denied the entire episode. Angered beyond belief, Blanchard slapped Baby Doll once, twice, three times, and continued to do so until **Dusty Rhodes** stormed in to the rescue! Later in the program, **Ric Flair** was refusing to release his figure-four on **Jim Jeffers**,



RANDY SAVAGE

Rick Martel, **The Fabulous Ones**, and **Baron Von Raschke** are also selling briskly, although their sales reports aren't in yet.

Randy Savage warmed up for a series of title matches against **Hulk Hogan** by defeating young **Dan Spivey**. Ringsiders report that Savage had a lot of difficulty with the youngster. Could Savage have been looking ahead, or is Spivey as tough as everyone is saying? That old standby, time, will have to tell.

That's all for now, wrestling fans. See you at the matches! □

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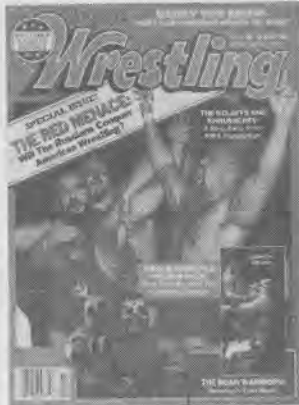
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OCTOBER 1985

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.

April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.

October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.

November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.

December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.

January 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Rich, Superstar, Piper.

February 1984/Stories include: Abdullah, Sawyers, Valiant, Von Erich.

March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.

May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.

June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.

July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.

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January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

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May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.

June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.

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October 1977/Stories include: Rhodes, Sammartino, Flair, Snuka.

November 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Slater, Mascaras, Snuka.

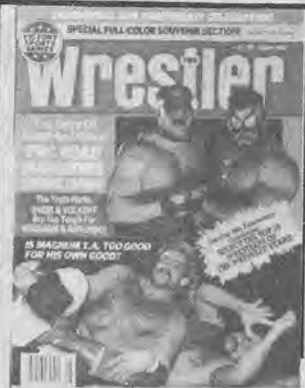
September 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Grahams, Andre, Mascaras.

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Backlund, McDaniel, Race.

November 1978/Stories include: Flair, Andre, Ladd, Graham.

December 1978/Stories include: Brisco, Mulligan, Andre, Blanchard.

February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.



AUGUST 1985

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

July 1979/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Sammartino, Andre.

August 1979/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Patera, Stevens, Superstar.

October 1979/Stories include: Flair, Valentine, Santana, Muraco.

December 1979/Stories include: Andre, Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras.

January 1980/Stories include: Race, Backlund, Snuka, Brisco.

February 1980/Stories include: Andre, Flair, DiBiase, Superstar.

March 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Andre.

April 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, DiBiase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

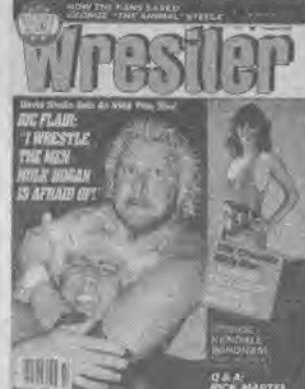
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September 1980/Stories include: Ladd, Patera, Steamboat, Gagne.

October 1980/Stories include: Patera, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Morales.



OCTOBER 1985

November 1980/Stories include: Rich, Hogan, Snuka, Super Destroyers.

January 1981/Stories include: Valentine, Rhodes, Patera, Von Erich.

February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoans, Blassie, Wrestling II.

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June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

December 1981/Stories include: Rhodes, Steele, Race, Hogan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.

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July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

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January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

March 1983/Stories include: Piper, Reed, Valiant, Roberts.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Brisco.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Brisco, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

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February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

THE WRESTLER

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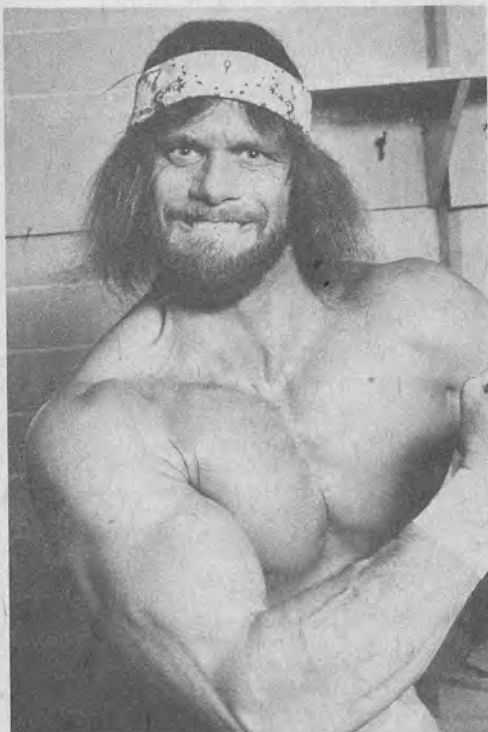
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THE INSIDER

By Eddie Ellner



Savage's pose is copted by Ellner (see opposite photo), providing Elizabeth with a basis for comparison.



Although his cause is hopeless, Ellner wants it to be known that Elizabeth is facing him on this page, and not Savage.

[The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone else on this magazine.]

Dear Miss Elizabeth,

No longer can I ignore this mumpish heart. The nightly gnash of teeth, the plaintive wail of your divine name has prompted the neighbors to contact the 26th precinct. But what do they know of love?

I love you, Elizabeth, oh boy, do I love you! Mine is a love of pure radiant neutron energy. It is a burning, fervent, and urgent love. But, please, my sugar eagle,

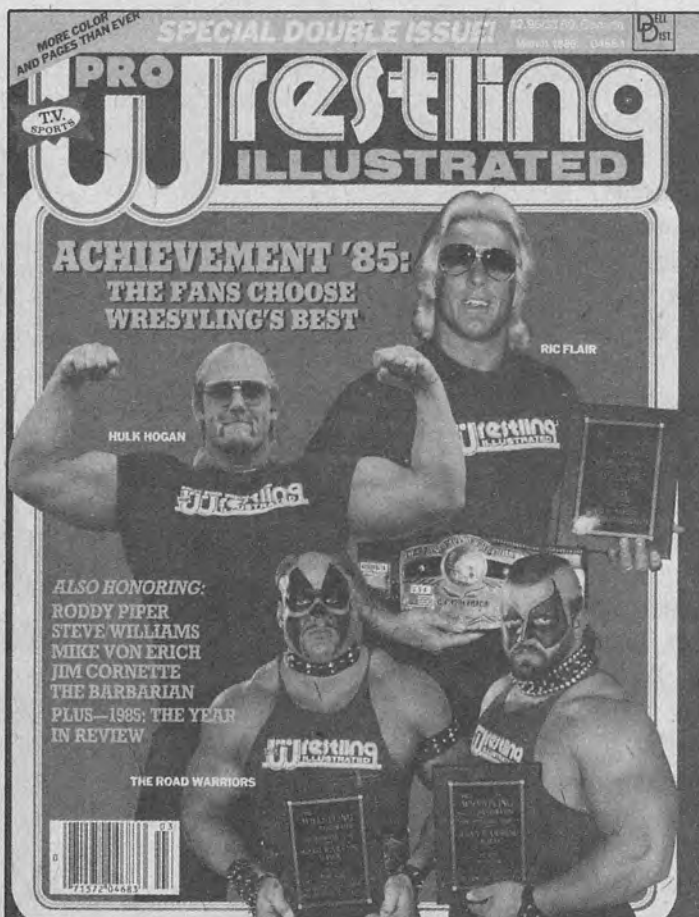
don't confuse my tenderness with teenaged, puppyish lust. A woman of your breeding must get enough of that, God knows. This libido ain't fueled by zits. Yes, for you I would eat the sands of the Sahara and wash it down with the Indian Ocean; for the warmth of your caress I would cut off my nose and swallow my ear, but, and of this I must convince you, mine is also a love powered by sophistication and maturity. It is the love the trappist monk has for his monastery; a mechanic has

for his three-quarter-inch wrench; an intellect for a treasured tome. In short, Liz, a first team All-America Opening Night on Broadway love; love so adult and frank, so vehement that it demands to be recognized.

This thing you have with Randy Savage isn't fooling anybody. Professionally speaking, I admire his wrestling ability, but (and this pains me, Liz) I must ask you: What else is there? Can you see yourself chained to someone who brandishes an ego the size of Dusty Rhodes' trunks? Forget that he is losing his hair. Forget that a recent straw poll voted him over-

(Continued on page 20)

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 18)

whelmingly as the ugliest man in professional wrestling. I implore you, Elizabeth, to *forget him*. He's bad news, a natural disaster, a casualty report.

It's as clear as your complexion that Savage is not for you. Where he is doltish and brutal and cadaverous, you are Florence Nightingale and Raquel Welch. Your legs are twin sticks of dynamite, your face a youthful monument to the powers of Art. The threat of your smile moves mountains. He is foul and putrescent. His breath empties a room.

The atrocious indignities that Savage commits on your person in public can only foreshadow the foul play he must perpetrate on you in private. This rustles my goat. To violate you is to repudiate life itself. Although sensitivity outweighs instinctual brawn, I did play ice hockey in college. *I'm all man, my possum*. Make sure Macho Mouse is aware of that. He might be able to take down Hogan, but if he tangles with me I hope he's on the WWF's early retirement plan. A woman like you is worth spilling every last ounce of blood for.

Most of us love from our need to love not because we find someone deserving. Forget this primate, Elizabeth. Let's talk about us. I can't promise you racoon furs and month-long European holidays, but you don't want those things. I know you don't. You are sad and forlorn in your gold and diamonds; your grief shines like a Crimson A; it's impossible for a leaden heart to glitter. I, too, have known the yoke of a failed relationship. I, too, have tasted the convict's hell. Elizabeth, I understand.

We would make utter sense together and I trust my faithful readers would agree with me. I tender myself to their intuition. Dear,

AN IMPARTIAL COMPARSION OF SAVAGE AND ELLNER

This survey was compiled by a random sampling of editors from *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Playgirl*, *Gentleman's Quarterly*, and *National Geographic*. THIS IS COMPLETELY LEGITIMATE.

CATEGORY	RANDY SAVAGE	EDDIE ELLNER
Looks like:	Mighty Joe Young.	Combination Elliott Gould and a young Robert Redford.
Intelligence:	Moves lips when he thinks.	Combination Thomas Wolfe and a young Albert Einstein.
Personality:	Wally Cox and Mighty Joe Young.	Combination Chevy Chase and a young Charlie Chaplin.
Compassion:	Godzilla and Charles Manson.	Combination Bishop Tutu and a young Mahatma Ghandi.



dear readers, my fate is in your hands. Shouldn't Miss Elizabeth turn away the domineering, beastly Randy Savage and in his place accept the proposal of me, Eddie Ellner, your faithful columnist? Don'tcha think we'd make a terrific couple? I wait, asphyxiated with love's paralyzing fumes, for your responses. Address them to *Ready For Love, c/o Ellner, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571*.

I caution my readers to the

Elizabeth tends to the fallen Savage. "The care she shows for him is never returned. I can do better by her," Ellner has promised.

gravity of this undertaking. This is no box of Crackerjacks to play with. I am agog over this babe. My every waking thought is entangled around her. I wish to make her mine. She must be mine. *She will be mine*. Help me, friends, and you will share in our rapture. I value your advice readers; do not disappoint me. □

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NEWS FROM THE

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

By Lawrence Yane



JUNKYARD DOG
vs.
TERRY FUNK



Funk smudged JYD's character and parental origins during the prematch introductions. He would soon regret his words. The bitter enemies exchanged unsuccessful sleeperholds before JYD headbutted Funk into never-never land. To emphasize the victory, Dog delayed his pin and set Funk up for his "big thump," after which he rolled the veteran up for the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine defeated King Tonga & Dino Bravo ... The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff defeated Scott McGhee & Tony Parisi ... Randy Savage defeated Gatorwolf ... Cpl. Kirschner defeated Rene Goulet ... Tito Santana defeated Iron Mike Sharpe.

ALBUQUERQUE, NM

By John Klemiento



JERRY BLACKWELL
vs.
MICHAEL HAYES



AWA wrestling reappeared here after a two-year absence and the fans were treated to top-level grappling. Hayes used his speed and quickness to confuse Blackwell, but ventured too close in the end and fell prey to a "big splash" off the ropes. The Freebird struggled to squirm free but couldn't budge the giant off of him.

OTHER BOUTS: Blackwell also won a \$50,000, 11-man battle royal ... Larry Hennig & Scott Hall defeated Michael Hayes & Buddy Roberts ... Leon White defeated Boris Zuhov ... Buck Zumhofe drew with Kelly Kiniski ... The Mongolian Stomper defeated Kevin Kelly.

EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

By Josephine Melanson



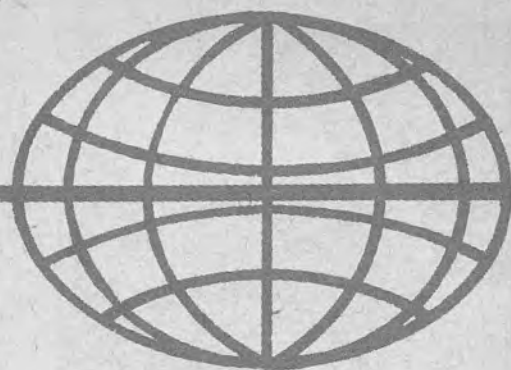
RIC FLAIR
vs.
DUSTY RHODES



Revenge was Rhodes' primary motivation in this contest. Rhodes bounced Flair from corner to corner, mashing the champ's face into a bloody mess. The pivotal moment came after the referee was knocked out of the ring. As the battle continued, Rhodes flipped Flair over the top rope and went on to pin the dazed champion. The final ruling, though, disqualified Rhodes for throwing his opponent over the top rope.

OTHER BOUTS: Buddy Roberts defeated Paul Ellering by disqualification ... The Rock 'n' Roll Express defeated The Long Riders ... Magnum T.A. defeated Tully Blanchard ... The Road Warriors beat Ivan Koloff & Krusher Khrushchev ... Carlos Colon defeated Konga the Barbarian ... Stan Hansen beat Rick Martel for the AWA World title (see "Names Makin' News").

WRESTLING CAPITALS



PITTSBURGH, PA

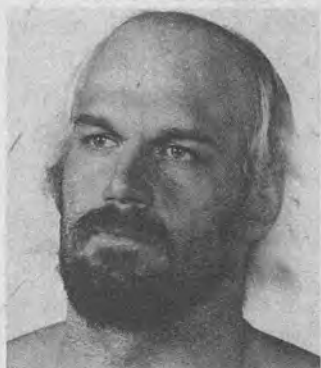
By Dean Grande



HULK HOGAN

vs.

JESSE VENTURA

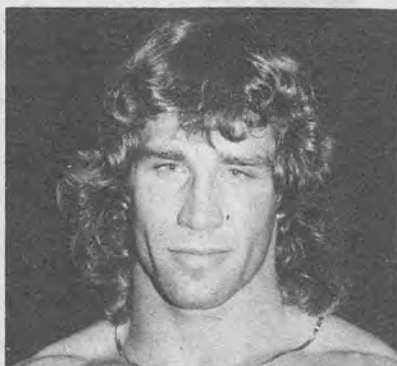


Ventura's attempt to become the world's first world heavyweight champion/color commentator went astray, as Hulk-a-mania ran wild in Pittsburgh. The two behemoths made light of the rules as they stomped their way in and out of the ring. Ventura seemed inspired, but couldn't maintain any momentum. After a series of legdrops, the referee counted one, two, and three and raised Hogan's arm in victory.

OTHER BOUTS: Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine defeated Mr. Wrestling II & Mike Rotundo ... Paul Orndorff & Rick Steamboat beat Mr. Fuji & Magnificent Muraco ... Dan Spivey defeated Barry O ... Hercules Hernandez defeated S.D. Jones ... King Tonga beat Rene Goulet.

FT. WORTH, TX

By Susie Shinstein



KERRY VON ERICH

vs.

MISSING LINK



Von Erich began the match with a dropkick that sent the Link scurrying from the ring. When he returned, he was met by a Von Erich claw that was useless against the Link's impenetrable noggin. Link butted Von Erich and followed his advantage with a stunning sock on the jaw that knocked Von Erich from the ring. Link followed Kerry out of the ring and knocked him out with a chair. Kerry was counted out and the Link scored a stunning upset.

OTHER BOUTS: John Tatum defeated Tommy Montana ... Rick Rude defeated Iceman Parsons ... Kevin Von Erich beat Chris Adams.

ORLANDO, FL

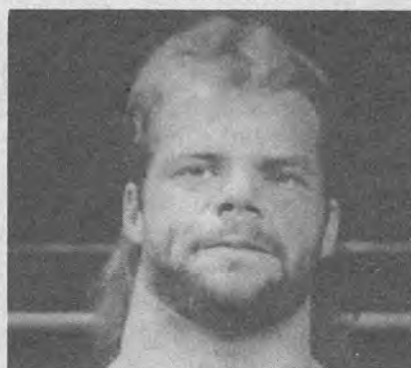
By Timothy Chazbo



WAHOO McDANIEL

vs.

LEX LUGAR



Wahoo needed all his experience to retain his Southern title against Luger in this lumberjack match. With Hiro Matsuda encouraging Luger from ringside, the rookie overwhelmed McDaniel with a deft series of power moves. Wahoo was able to toss Luger out of the ring and catch his breath. Three lightning quick tomahawk chops made Luger easy pin prey. Shortly after, however, Wahoo would lose his Southern title to the determined rookie.

OTHER BOUTS: Prince Laukea defeated Ron Ritchie ... Lady Maxine defeated Angel Vachon ... Kendall & Barry Windham defeated Purple Haze & Kevin Sullivan ... Blackjack Mulligan defeated Maya Singh.



Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING



WENDI RICHTER VS. SPIDER LADY

NEW YORK, NY: I'm sitting in the back room of a watering hole that best remains nameless, a watered-down Scotch to my right. The ice had melted long ago, but my concern was directed more toward the inside straight that I was trying to decide whether or not to attempt to fill. I decided not, tossed my cards to the dealer, and sauntered out to the front room to get some ice and something else for those cubes to water down. The bartender knew that when I was in this particular establishment, I absolutely wanted to discuss anything, *anything*, but wrestling. That's why I don't give the name of the place; it's intended to be my haven, my world away from the world. But not even the man with the soggy dishrag and the philosopher's eyes would allow me to get away clean this day. "That's something about Wendi, huh?" I grunted in recognition of his comment and went back to tackle the next hand. But he was right, it *was* something about Wendi. Soon after she lost the World Women's title back to Fabulous Moolah, and even before the April 1986 copy of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* with the cover story ("Women's Wrestling Comes Of Age: Is Wendi Richter More Popular

Than Hulk Hogan?") hit the stands, the rumor mill began working overtime: Wendi is despondent over having lost the title, Wendi is depressed beyond words, Hogan did not like the implications of the *PWI* cover story and began to apply pressure to WWF higher-ups, Wendi has decided to leave the sport, Wendi has been fired by the WWF. I'm not certain which of the the above are true, or even if *any* of them are true. Right now, there's just too much chaos. All I can say at this juncture is that maybe the WWF *was* afraid of Wendi getting more popular than Hulk Hogan. It's arguable that she was, and a damn good argument in favor of that position appeared in *PWI*. Go check it out and see for yourself. I already read that issue; I'm gonna spend my time trying to get in touch with Wendi. Latest word I heard is that she's sequestered herself somewhere in Puerto Rico for a month.

PORTLAND, OR: "Billy Jack Haynes is back." Maybe I should take that phrase and keep it on the side somewhere to use in every column, only changing the dateline each issue. I can't believe it. I honestly can't believe it. Billy was on the verge of become *the* wrestling star of 1986. He wisely made the move to compete in the World Championship region, an area that had the greatest potential to best display his unique abilities. And those abilities were being highlighted. In fact, on one of Haynes' last televised matches, he did three extended-arm over-the-head full presses in a row, one each on Ole Anderson, Arn Anderson, and Tully Blanchard. Haynes was hot, and getting hotter. His popularity might have rivaled that of Magnum T.A., or Dusty Rhodes. He would have had shots at Ric Flair. He would have been nationally featured each week on *World Championship Wrestling*. But the kid's got no patience. He goes back to the Pacific Northwest. *Of course* he'll regain the PNW heavyweight title. He'll wipe 'em out up there. But for what? Toward what end? Billy Jack Haynes could have had it all.

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Instead, he's the instant candidate for the recipient of the Worst Career Move of the Decade award. The PNW's gain is the rest of the country's loss.

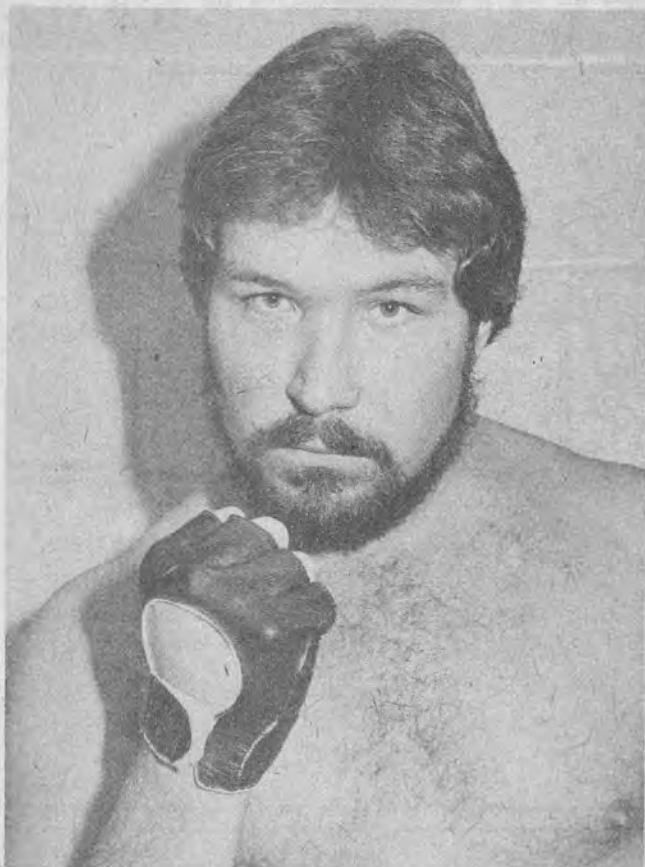
MEMPHIS, TN: Last issue, our "Hotseat" interview featured a discussion with Jerry Lawler. It revolved around the fact that Lawler had promised his fans that he would retire if he didn't win a world title in 1985. Well, Jerry didn't win a world title, and he didn't retire, and for that I'm glad. After all, Jerry overstepped his bounds by making that promise. And in the wake of his failure, I think all of his fans should sit back a minute and think: Would you damn a man for failure, or do you think you should praise him for having the courage of his convictions to place *everything* on the line in a promise that he



JERRY LAWLER VS. RICK MARTEL

knew he'd have a hell of a time keeping? I side with the latter, obviously, and so should you. Jerry is a deeply committed man who lives, eats, breathes, and sleeps wrestling. He could no sooner quit wrestling than I could quit dr—er, uh, writing. So have some sympathy for Jerry. Reneging on a promise is difficult enough. Lawler needs your support now more than ever before.

SHREVEPORT, LA: There are fewer sights more disheartening and depressing than to see a normally healthy man clinging to life with the aid of tubes, pumps, gears, widgets, and all manner and manifestations of electric and electronic gadgetry and cir-



TED DIBIASE

cuitry. I had an uncle who died after a lingering illness and too many months in the hospital, and I'll always have sympathy in my heart for anyone whose life so much as skirts this particular issue. I was horrified to see Ted DiBiase strapped to a hospital bed with enough machinery attached to him to fill out an episode of Spielberg's *Amazing Stories*. DiBiase had suffered a neck injury resulting from an attack at the hands of Dick Murdoch. Ironically, it was the very same injury that killed Ted's father, "Iron" Mike DiBiase. Thank God that Ted will be all right, though. And you know something? Staring into the face of death like that might have given Ted something to think about. In fact, I'm sure it did. And he certainly had plenty of time to do some thinking. Doctors are talking about a return to the ring for Ted, and my money's on the wager that we'll see a profoundly different Ted DiBiase when that return finally happens. □

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



**DORY
FUNK JR.**

The former NWA World champion has been on an extended tour of the Orient, where he teamed with Shohei "Giant" Baba in "The World's Strongest Tag Team" tournament. Although Dory and Baba

didn't win, they did make it to the final round where they were beaten by Stan Hansen and Ted DiBiase. Dory regularly wrestles in Puerto Rico. When he's not in the sun of Puerto Rico, he can usually be found relaxing at his lakeside home in North Carolina.



**TOMMY
GILBERT**

Tommy is currently serving as a referee in the Mid-South area. His son, Eddie, is the co-holder of the Mid-South tag team belts along with The Nightmare. Thus far, Tommy has steered clear of refereeing

any of Eddie's bouts, but he has assured Mid-South officials that if he is put in that position, they can be certain he will definitely be impartial. Eddie and Nightmare's opponents, though, may not feel so comfortable with Tommy as third man in the ring!



**ANGELO
POFFO**

The father of both Lanny Poffo and Randy Savage is currently living in Lexington, Kentucky, and keeps in close touch with both his sons. Angelo was a major star in the '50s and '60s, and exercises his influence

over '80s wrestling by advising the careers of both his boys. Angelo, who managed many wrestlers during his ring tenure, tells us that his sons' success is clearly a reflection of his great advisory prowess. Lanny and Randy wouldn't dare say differently.



**BUDDY
ROGERS**

To the disappointment of many starry-eyed youngsters, "The Buddy Rogers School Of Wrestling" is no longer in existence. Instead of devoting his time to many young men, Buddy has opted to work exclusive-

ly on developing and overseeing a training program for his son David, who hopes to make his pro debut sometime in 1986. Meanwhile, Rogers still works out regularly and is a periodic guest broadcaster on the *Pro Wrestling U.S.A.* program.

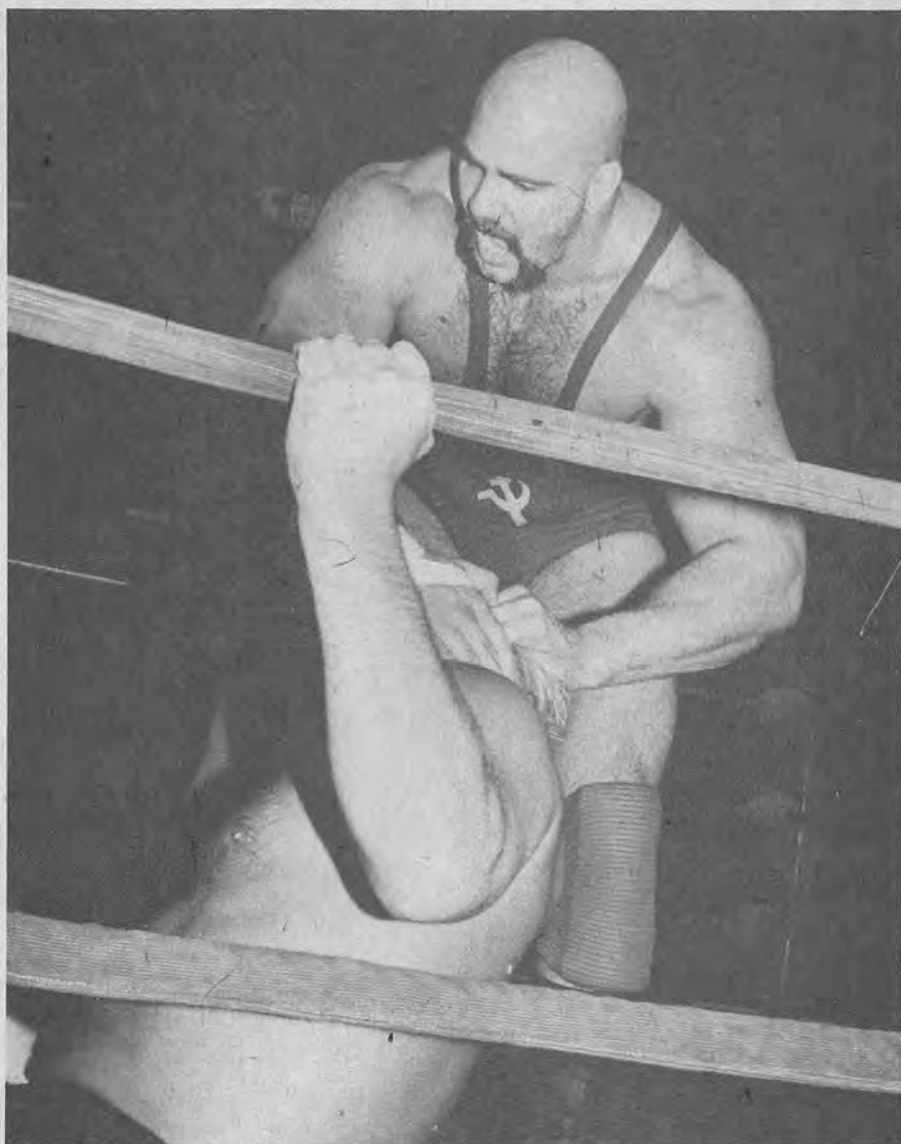
INSIDE WRESTLING

117

capsule profile

NIKITA KOLOFF

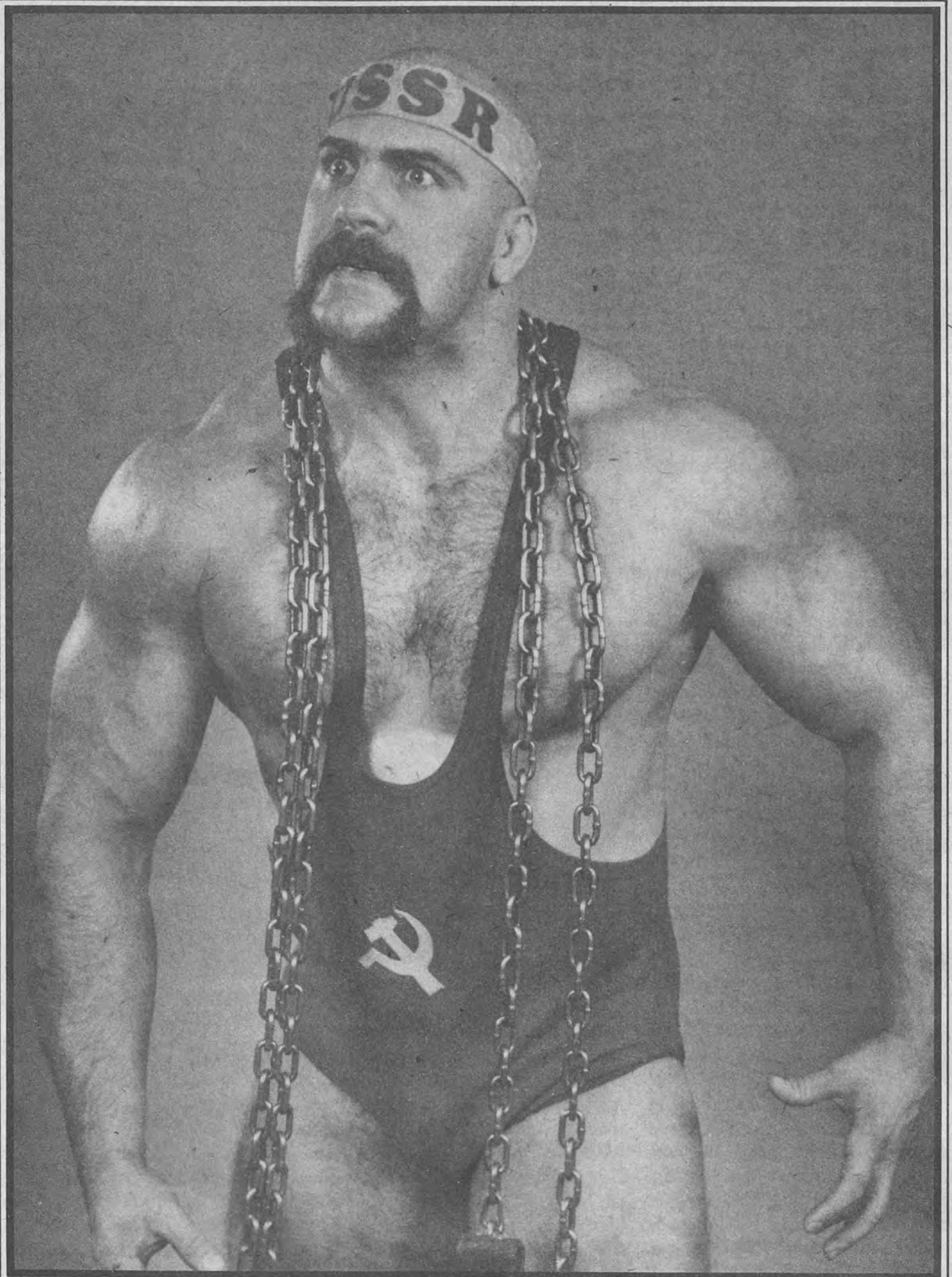
THIS MIGHTY RUSSIAN stands 6'2" and weighs 275 pounds—most of it muscle (*"I am strongest man in professional wrestling!"*) ... Known as "The Russian Nightmare," "The Russian Road Warrior," and "Russia's Ambassador Of Destruction," Nikita is the nephew of "The Russian Bear"—Ivan Koloff (*"My uncle Ivan teach me great deal about wrestling and about American way of life"*) ... Made his professional debut on June 6, 1984 (*"I beat up American fool Brett Hart and prove I ready for professional rings"*) ... Forced Hart to submit in 15 seconds with a backbreaker ... Over the next year, would establish himself on the NWA scene with a reign of terror and mayhem that was unprecedented for a rookie ... Frequently wrestles in six-man competition with his uncle Ivan and Krusher Khrushchev (*"Uncle Ivan and Krusher are two best wrestlers in world!"*) ... In June 1985, Nikita underwent intensive training for his first title shot against NWA World champion Ric Flair (*"Uncle Ivan lock me in dungeon and we train very hard for very long"*) ... The first-ever Nikita-Flair match took place on July 6, 1985, in Charlotte, North Carolina, and was the main event of the first Great American Bash card ... The match lasted nearly 40 minutes, resulting in an exhausted Flair pinning an



Nikita Koloff compresses Jimmy Valiant's scalp with his powerful hands. "Russia's Ambassador Of Destruction" has made more of an impression on this sport in two years than most wrestlers make in an entire career.

equally exhausted Nikita Koloff (*"Flair try trickery to defeat me! I will wrestle him again, and I will beat him! The road to Moscow will be paved in NWA gold!"*) ... A series of Nikita-Flair matches soon followed ... Thus far, Nikita and Ivan Koloff and Krusher Khrushchev are two-time holders of the NWA World tag team title (*"We are Russian team, so any two of us can defend belts"*) ... The second tag team reign came to an end at Starrcade '85 when Ivan and Nikita

were defeated by The Rock 'n' Roll Express (*"More American trickery!"*) ... Nikita recently made his first trip to our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. (*"I don't understand this country and all memorials to strange men; Kremlin is much nicer than White House, anyway"*) ... Nikita's future is bright ... Regaining the tag team title, or a major singles title, seems assured sometime in 1986 (*"Russia's glory must be displayed with NWA gold!"*) □



NIKITA KOLOFF

Ready For The Hall Of Fame:

Photos by Bruce Krietzman

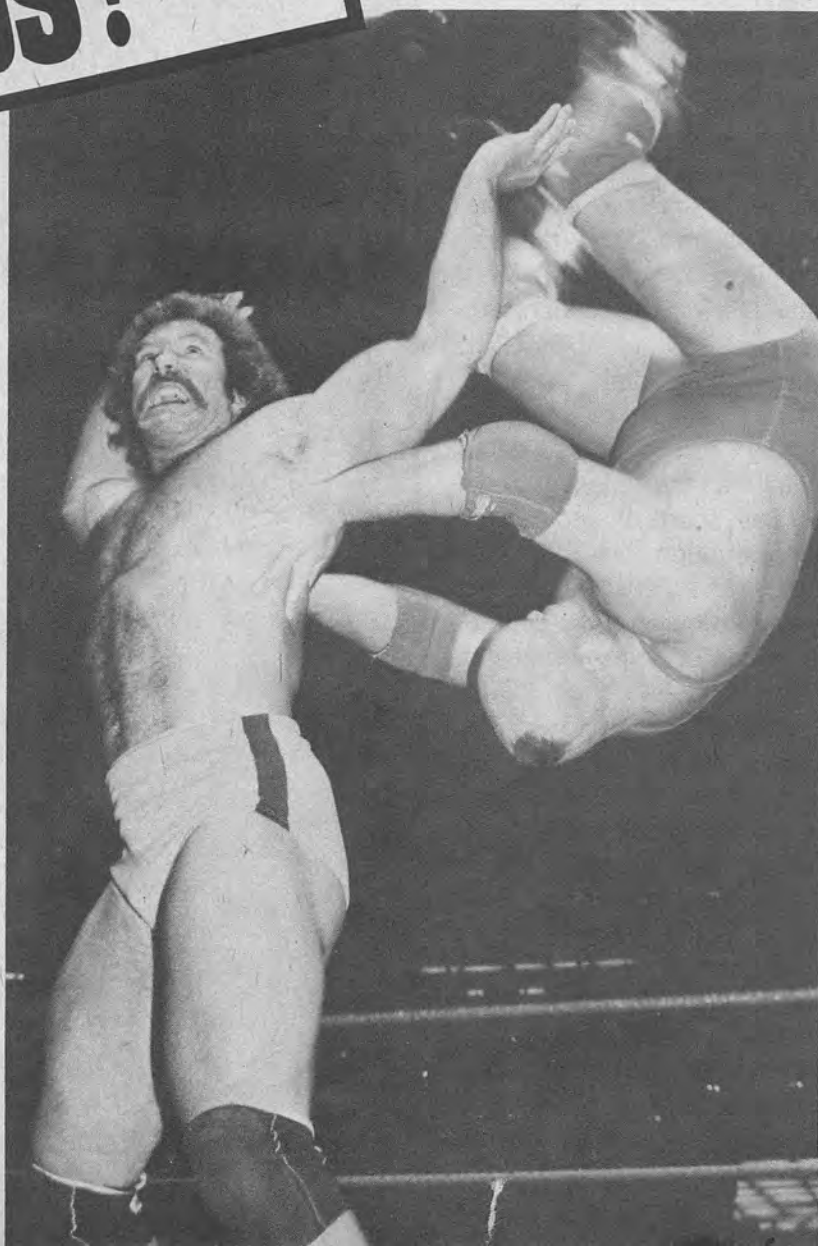
THE AWA'S FUTURE IS IN SCOTT HALL'S HANDS!

Seldom in the course of athletic history are fans privileged to witness the coming of an individual who has the potential to change the very face of his chosen sport. In the world of professional wrestling, Scott Hall is just such a man

EARLY IN 1973, a man by the name of Ric Flair made his unheralded debut in the squared circle. To be precise, it was February 1973, and for the record the opponent was George "Scrap Iron" Gadatski. Flair won the match, but few fans cheered or booed. They were waiting for the card's main event that was still many matches away.

Little more than a decade later, Flair established himself as *the* premier force in the NWA, professional wrestling's oldest and largest sanctioning body. Currently enjoying his third NWA World title reign, Flair amassed a lengthy series of championship achievements between that chilly February 1973 debut and the glory days

Boris Zuhov has a long way to fall after being backdropped by Scott Hall. Much of the future success of the AWA rests on this 6'8", 290-pounder's broad shoulders.





of the 1980s. Today, the fans cheer and boo—but they all recognize that Flair is the quintessential professional wrestler.

Little more than a year ago, Scott Hall made his professional debut in Kansas City, wrestling in a tag team match with Dan Spivey. Together, they defeated Bulldog Bob Brown and Marty Jannetty. Few fans cheered or booed. Like Flair in 1973, it was an unheralded debut.

And as Flair did over the decade that followed his debut, Scott Hall has the potential to galvanize the sport of professional wrestling through his formidable size (6'8" and 290 pounds) and his ever-developing skills (learned at the hands of such ringmasters as Flair, Barry Windham, Dusty Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Terry Taylor, Harley Race, Pat O'Connor, Curt Hennig, and Rick Martel).

Indeed, Scott Hall could do for a suffering AWA what Flair did for the NWA, or what Hulk Hogan has done for the WWF over the past two years.

Few people who *Inside Wrestling* spoke with would go on the record with their comments about the state of affairs in the AWA today. Most agreed that wrestling

in the AWA, while maintaining high scientific standards, and boasting such top stars as The Road Warriors, Stan Hansen, Rick Martel, Sgt. Slaughter, and The Fabulous Freebirds, is nevertheless suffering from an overall lethargy.

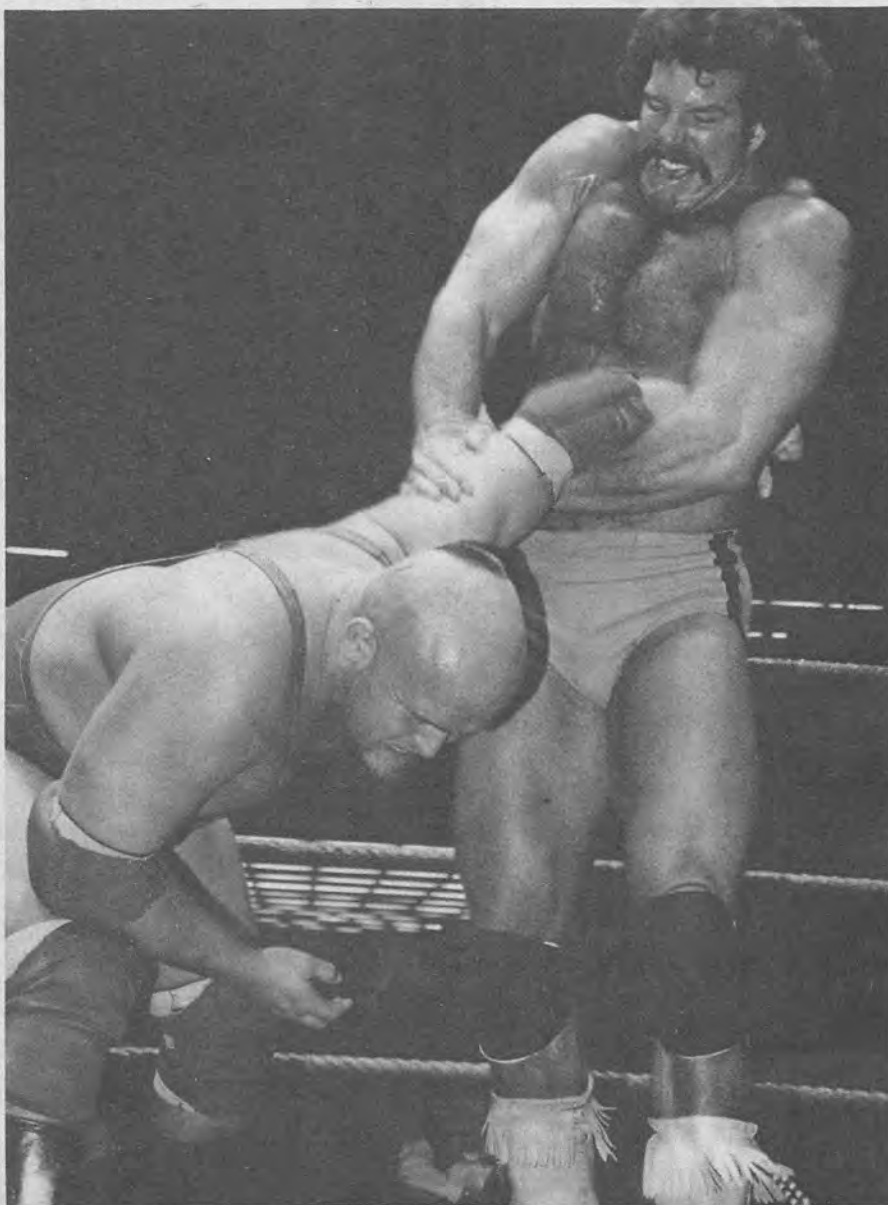
But young Scott Hall, barely out of his rookie year, has already injected a new sense of excitement and drama into the AWA. He is being touted as one of the very best of a bumper crop of rookie stars from last year, and his admirers are hardly overstating his case.

Granted, Hall has a long way to

go. Of course Hall's natural size and strength are his primary assets, but he has yet to learn how to capitalize on those natural physical gifts. He's limber enough to maneuver his 6'8" frame around the ring fairly well, but he's got to work on developing his speed. And, of course, he's got to develop an extensive repertoire of scientific maneuvers.

"Scott is still in the learning stages of his career, but he's coming along very, very well," said nine-time AWA World champion Verne Gagne, who has spent many hours in the gym training Hall. "The first step, of course, is

Hall has his way with Steve Regal, who at 220 pounds is physically overmatched (left). If Zuhkov thought that Sgt. Slaughter was the only American wrestler who would stand in his path, he was mistaken. Hall works on the Russian's left arm (below and opposite right).



to learn the sweet science of wrestling. He's got to emphasize the basics of the sport and build his knowledge of what kinds of maneuvers are available to him to use in the ring. And that's something that takes time.

"Hall is a young man whose size limits his use of certain kinds of maneuvers, but helps him in the use of others," Gagne continued. "For example, a high vertical

suplex by Scott would be devastating if properly applied, but a flying vault pin attempt, such as Rick Martel often uses, would may be very difficult for him to execute.

"Once Hall develops his scientific knowledge," Gagne continued, "he'll have to work on developing his instinctual reactions, and that's something that really comes only with experience

against a wide variety of opponents. Scott's a smart young man, and he'll pick up those skills quickly. I look for him to develop into world championship-caliber material in a very, very short time."

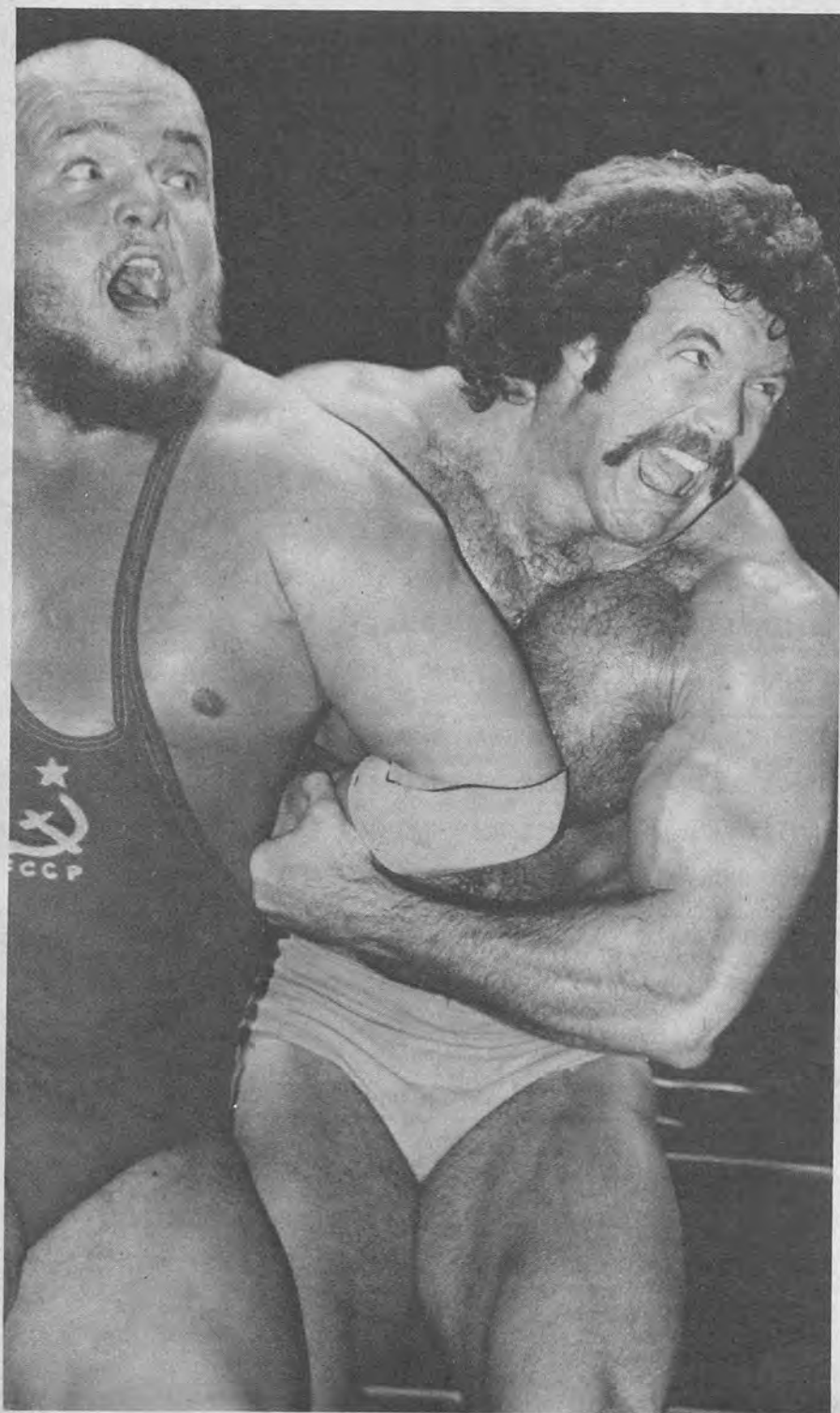
Gagne's prediction could well be right. Already there are comparisons being made between Hall and another similarly moustachioed heartthrob, Magnum T.A., and the idea of a Hall-T.A. tag team is already very intriguing.

Before that idea can even be entertained, however, Hall will have to continue to develop his skills in the AWA. Already, Hall has scored impressive victories throughout the area. He won a \$100,000 battle royal on Thanksgiving day in St. Paul, which was preceded three weeks earlier by another battle royal victory in a 21-man contest in Milwaukee. He has wrestled tag team and singles matches against virtually everyone in the AWA. And along the way, he has succeeded in capturing more than an impressive won-loss record—he has captured the imagination of the AWA fans. And now the rest of the wrestling world is sitting up to take notice.

Right now, Scott Hall's future looks very bright indeed. He is just beginning to ride a wave of popularity that will undoubtedly grow greater in 1986. His skills, both mental and physical, are improving with every match. And each week brings hundreds of new fans into the fold.

"AWA World champion Scott Hall." It sounds right. And it may not be very far off. And should that happen, the AWA will undoubtedly crackle with electric excitement that a unique individual star can create.

After all, look what happened to the NWA and the WWF when a couple of guys by the names of Ric Flair and Hulk Hogan rose to prominence! □



INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

- 4—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
- 5—**STAN HANSEN**
322, Borger, TX
- 6—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX
- 7—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

- 8—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO
- 9—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 10—**RICK MARTEL**
236, Quebec City, Quebec
- 11—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

- 12—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 13—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
- 14—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 15—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

NWA

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
- 3—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

- 4—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
276, Moscow, Russia
- 5—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO
- 6—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 7—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

- 8—**HARLEY RACE**
253, Kansas City, MO
- 9—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
- 10—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
260, Midland, TX
- 11—**LANCE VON ERICH**
245, Dallas

- 12—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 13—**BOBBY JAGGERS**
265, Dunlap, KS
- 14—**CARLOS COLON**
246, Bayamon, Puerto Rico
- 15—**LEX LUGAR**
280, Chicago

AWA

- 1—**STAN HANSEN**
322, Borger, TX
- 2—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC
- 3—**RICK MARTEL**
236, Quebec City, Quebec

- 4—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 5—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA
- 6—**BORIS ZUKHOV**
254, Leningrad, Russia
- 7—**SCOTT HALL**
290, Minneapolis, MN

- 8—**THE BARBARIAN**
316, parts unknown
- 9—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 10—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 11—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN

- 12—**BARON VON RASCHKE**
271, Germany
- 13—**BILLY ROBINSON**
246, Manchester, England
- 14—**JERRY BLACKWELL**
474, Stone Mountain, GA
- 15—**MONGOLIAN STOMPER**
259, Mongolia

WWF

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX
- 3—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

- 4—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 5—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 6—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI
- 7—**TERRY FUNK**
247, Amarillo, TX

- 8—**KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ
- 9—**RODDY PIPER**
231, Scotland
- 10—**ANDRE THE GIANT**
505, Grenoble, France
- 11—**JOHN STUDD**
364, Washington, DC

- 12—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA
- 13—**JESSE VENTURA**
270, Muscle Beach, CA
- 14—**HILLBILLY JIM**
282, Mud Lick, KY
- 15—**ADRIAN ADONIS**
289, New York, NY

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 3—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

- 4—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
- 5—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 6—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX
- 7—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX

- 8—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, New York, NY
- 9—**BARRY WINDHAM**
230, Sweetwater, TX
- 10—**HILLBILLY JIM**
282, Mud Lick, KY
- 11—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO

- 12—**RICK MARTEL**
236, Quebec City, Quebec
- 13—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
- 14—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC
- 15—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

MOST HATED

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis
- 2—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 3—**DICK MURDOCH**
270, Waxahachie, TX

- 4—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI
- 5—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 6—**RODDY PIPER**
231, Glasgow, Scotland
- 7—**STAN HANSEN**
322, Borger, TX

- 8—**CHRIS ADAMS**
230, Stratford, England
- 9—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
295, Tulsa, OK
- 10—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 11—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN

- 12—**OLE ANDERSON**
256, Minneapolis, MN
- 13—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 14—**BOBBY JAGGERS**
265, Dunlap, KS
- 15—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
239, Boston, MA

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
No. 1 contenders to AWA and NWA World tag titles
- 2—**RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON**
NWA World tag team champions
- 3—**IVAN & NIKITA KOLOFF**
No. 2 contenders to AWA tag team title
- 4—**GREG VALENTINE & BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
WWF World tag team champions
- 5—**OLE & ARN ANDERSON**
National tag team champions

- 6—**CHRIS ADAMS & GINO HERNANDEZ**
World Class tag team champions
- 7—**JIM GARVIN & STEVE REGAL**
AWA World tag team champions
- 8—**DYNAMITE KID & DAVEY BOY SMITH**
No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 9—**STEVE WILLIAMS & TED DIBIASE**
Mid-South tag team champions
- 10—**KERRY & KEVIN VON ERICH**
No. 1 contenders to World Class tag team title

- 11—**DENNIS CONDREY & BOBBY EATON**
No. 3 contenders to NWA tag team title
- 12—**AUSTIN IDOL & JERRY LAWLER**
Mid-Southern tag team champions
- 13—**JIM NEIDHARDT & BRETT HART**
No. 2 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 14—**STEVE KEIRN & STAN LANE**
No. 1 contenders to Mid-Southern tag team title
- 15—**SCOTT HALL & CURT HENNIG**
No. 2 contenders to AWA tag team title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler . . . "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices . . . Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue . . . The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place . . . Though several Canadian and Japanese championships are listed in the "Roll Call," the ratings themselves reflect United States-based competition.

For period ended January 2, 1986

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALABAMA CHAMPION: ROBERTO SOTO

(September 20, 1985; tournament final over The Flame; Mobile, AL)

ALL-ASIA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

ISAMU TERANISHI & ANIMAL HAMAGUCHI

(July 18, 1985; from Akio Sato & Takashi Ishikawa; Tokyo, Japan)

* AWA JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: BUCK ZUMHOFF

(November 28, 1985; from Steve Regal; St. Paul, MN)

AWA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP: SHERRI MARTEL

(September 28, 1985; Candi Divine; Chicago)

* AWA WORLD CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(December 29, 1985; from Rick Martel; East Rutherford, NJ)

AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JIM GARVIN & STEVE REGAL

(September 29, 1985; from The Road Warriors; St. Paul, MN)

AMERICAS CHAMPION: SGT. SLAUGHTER

(June 21, 1985; from Larry Zbyszko; Chicago, IL)

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: DINO BRAVO

(May 28, 1985; defeated King Tonga to fill vacant title; Montreal)

CANADIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JACQUES & RAYMOND ROUGEAU

(June 12, 1985; defeated King Tonga & Dick Charland to fill vacant title; Quebec City)

* CENTRAL STATES CHAMPION: BOB BROWN

(December 17, 1985; from Brett Sawyer; Ames, IA)

CENTRAL STATES TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRAD & BART BATTEN

(November 21, 1985; tournament final over The Midnight Express; Kansas City, MO)

CENTRAL STATES TV CHAMPION: ART CREWS

(November 27, 1985; from Gary Royal; Ft. Dodge, IA)

FLORIDA CHAMPION: KENDALL WINDHAM

(September 2, 1985; from Jack Hart; Tampa, FL)

IWF WOMEN'S CHAMPION: MISTY BLUE SIMMES

(March 30, 1985; from Nickie Ryan; Malden, MA)

* MID-ATLANTIC CHAMPION: KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV

(November 28, 1985; tournament final over Sam Houston; Greensboro, NC)

* MID-SOUTH TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVE WILLIAMS & TED DIBIASE

(December 26, 1985; from Eddie Gilbert & The Nightmare; Biloxi, MS)

MID-SOUTH TV CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Butch Reed)

* MID-SOUTHERN CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER

(December 19, 1985; from Bill Dundee; Memphis, TN)

MID-SOUTHERN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: DUTCH MANTEL

(November 9, 1985; from Phil Hickerson; Memphis, TN)

* MID-SOUTHERN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

AUSTIN IDOL & JERRY LAWLER

(December 9, 1985; from Bill Dundee & Dutch Mantel; Memphis, TN)

MISSOURI CHAMPION: HARLEY RACE

(August 2, 1985; from Jerry Blackwell; St. Louis)

* NATIONAL CHAMPION: DUSTY RHODES

(December 19, 1985; from Buddy Landell; Albuquerque, NM)

NATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: OLE & ARN ANDERSON

(May 28, 1985; from T-Bolt Patterson & Manny Fernandez; Charlotte, NC)

NWA INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: JUMBO TSURUTA

(August 31, 1983; from Bruiser Brody; Tokyo, Japan)

NWA INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TIGER MASK

(August 31, 1985; from Kuniaki Kobayashi; Tokyo, Japan)

NWA INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JUMBO TSURUTA & TENRYU

(September 3, 1984; from Bruiser Brody & Crusher Blackwell; Japan)

NWA JAPANESE JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: HIRO SAITO

(July 28, 1985; from The Cobra; Osaka, Japan)

NWA JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DENNY BROWN

(September 15, 1985; from Gary Royal; Atlanta)

NWA SIX-MAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

IVAN & NIKITA KOLOFF & KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV

(December 1984; first team to claim NWA six-man title)

NWA TV CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Dusty Rhodes)

NWA WORLD CHAMPION: RIC FLAIR

(May 24, 1984; from Kerry Von Erich; Yokosuka City, Japan)

* NWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON

(November 28, 1985; from Ivan & Nikita Koloff; Greensboro, NC)

* NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: DICK SLATER

(January 1, 1986; from Butch Reed; Tulsa, OK)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPION: BOBBY JAGGERS

(November 9, 1985; from Lance Von Erich; Portland, OR)

* PACIFIC NORTHWEST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

TOM ZENK & SCOTT DORING

(December 14, 1985; over Mike Miller & Moondog Moretti; Portland, OR)

PWF CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(July 30, 1985; from Shohei Baba; Fukuoka, Japan)

PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STAN HANSEN & TED DIBIASE

(as mandated by PWF wrestling officials)

POLYNESIAN PACIFIC CHAMPION: LARS ANDERSON

(August 3, 1985; from Bad News Allen; Honolulu)

POLYNESIAN PACIFIC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

ROCKY & RICKY JOHNSON

(December 19, 1984; from Superfly Tui & Super Samoan Sakalia; Honolulu)

SOUTHEAST CHAMPION: EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET

(August 6, 1985; from Austin Idol; Birmingham, AL)

* SOUTHEAST CONTINENTAL CHAMPION: ROBERT FULLER

(December 23, 1985; from Roberto Soto; Birmingham, AL)

SOUTHEAST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE NIGHTMARES

(October 5, 1985; from Brickhouse Brown & Norvell Austin; Birmingham, AL)

* SOUTHEAST U.S. JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TIM HORNER

(December 30, 1985; from Ken Timbs; Birmingham, AL)

SOUTHERN CHAMPION: LEX LUGAR

(November 19, 1985; from Wahoo McDaniel; Tampa, FL)

* TEXAS ALL-STAR U.S. CHAMPION: BIG BUBBA

(December 21, 1985; from Al Madril; San Antonio, TX)

TEXAS ALL-STAR JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DALE VEASEY

(September 1, 1985; tournament final over Terry Daniels; San Antonio, TX)

TEXAS ALL-STAR TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

PAUL DIAMOND & SHAWN MICHAELS

(November 17, 1985; from The Hoods; San Antonio, TX)

* TEXAS ALL-STAR ALL-ASIAN CHAMPIONS:

PAUL DIAMOND & SHAWN MICHAELS

(December 10, 1985; from Fujuki & Kowada; Odessa, TX)

* U.S. CHAMPION: MAGNUM T.A.

(November 28, 1985; from Tully Blanchard; Greensboro, NC)

U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Billy Jack Haynes & Wahoo McDaniel)

WORLD CLASS AMERICAN CHAMPION: RICK RUDE

(November 4, 1985; from Iceman Parsons; Ft. Worth, TX)

WORLD CLASS MIDDLE EASTERN CHAMPION: MIKE VON ERICH

(August 7, 1985; tournament final over Gino Hernandez; Tel Aviv)

WORLD CLASS SIX-MAN CHAMPIONS:

KERRY & KEVIN VON ERICH & BRIAN ADIDAS

(September 2, 1985; from Killer Brooks, Mark Lewin, and One Man Gang; Ft. Worth, TX)

* WORLD CLASS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

CHRIS ADAMS & GINO HERNANDEZ

(November 28, 1985; over Kerry & Kevin Von Erich to fill vacant title; Dallas, TX)

* WORLD CLASS TV CHAMPION: MARK YOUNGBLOOD

(December 23, 1985; from Jack Victory; Ft. Worth, TX)

* WORLD CLASS TEXAS CHAMPION: THE GRAPPLER

(December 9, 1985; from Brian Adidas; Ft. Worth, TX)

WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPION: THE FABULOUS MOOLAH

(November 25, 1985; from Wendi Richter; New York)

WORLD WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

DESIREE PETERSEN & VELVET MCINTYRE

(May 1983; from Joyce Grable & Wendi Richter; Calgary, Alberta)

WWC JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ERIC EMBRY

(November 25, 1985; from Invader III; Doora, Puerto Rico)

WWC NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: HERCULES AYALA

(March 10, 1985; from Randy Savage; Ponce, Puerto Rico)

WWC NORTH AMERICAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

INVADER I & INVADER III

(September 21, 1985; from Butch Miller & Luke Williams; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWC PUERTO RICAN CHAMPION: ERIC EMBRY

(August 3, 1985; from Super Medic; Bayaman, Puerto Rico)

WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BUTCH MILLER & LUKE WILLIAMS

(June 21, 1985; from Invader III & The Medic; Manati, Puerto Rico)

WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: CARLOS COLON

(June 15, 1985; from Dory Funk Jr.; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: TITO SANTANA

(July 6, 1985; from Greg Valentine; Baltimore, MD)

WWF INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: TATSUMI FUJINAMI

(August 4, 1983; from Gino Brito; New York)

WWF INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

TATSUMI FUJINAMI & KENGO KIMURA

(May 24, 1985; tournament final over Adrian Adonis & Dick Murdoch; Kobe City, Japan)

WWF JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: HIRO SAITO

(July 28, 1985; from The Cobra; Osaka, Japan)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: HULK HOGAN

(January 23, 1984; from The Iron Sheik; New York)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

GREG VALENTINE & BRUTUS BEEFCAKE

(August 24, 1985; from Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo; Philadelphia)

Starrcade's Over, But The Feud

DUSTY RHODES & R CANNOT SURVIVE '86!

One fact about Starrcade '85 is undeniable: The main event between Ric Flair and Dusty Rhodes will go down in wrestling history as a classic. But anyone who thinks that match solved anything between the two men had better think again!



NWA champion Ric Flair reaches over the ropes and grabs a handful of Dusty Rhodes' curly blond locks.

DUSTY RHODES' FACE was bathed in sweat. Each salty bead of perspiration reflected both the glare of the arena spotlights and the exhaustion of his body's superhuman efforts, then dropped to the mat to further drench the already soggy canvas.

Ric Flair's face was also bathed in sweat, but there was something else there that is seldom seen in the countenance of the NWA World champion: desperation.

The muscles on the forehead, just between the eyes, tensed with the un-

imaginable stress of the moment. The teeth clenched. The pulse raced. The chest heaved. Desperation—an alien emotion to Ric Flair. Desperation, for it seemed as if his third NWA title reign would in a matter of minutes—perhaps even seconds—come to an end.

Desperation turned to relief as Flair's cousins, Ole and Arn Anderson, charged the ring. Arn hit the ring first. Dusty kicked him in the head with his boot—that controversial “reinforced” boot—and sent Arn sprawling to the arena floor. Ole hit the ring next, attacked Dusty, and Flair went in for the pin.

Referee Tommy Young had been knocked out of the ring only minutes earlier. No referee was there to make the count. Flair looked up for the referee, Dusty moved swiftly, and seconds later had Flair locked up in a small package. By then, a second referee, Gene Ligon, had come into the ring. Ligon made the three-count, and a new NWA World champion was crowned.

Or so it seemed.

NWA President Bob Geigel was in Atlanta's Omni for the match. Following extensive discussions with referee Tommy Young, it was determined that Young, though on the arena floor, had nevertheless already disqualified Flair



Dusty's biggest weakness is his susceptibility to cuts. Before long, the blood begins to trickle down his face.

for outside interference as soon as Arn Anderson hit the ring. In effect, everything that occurred in the match from that point on, including of course the pinfall, was in an official sense declared null and void.

In a practical sense, it was just the beginning.

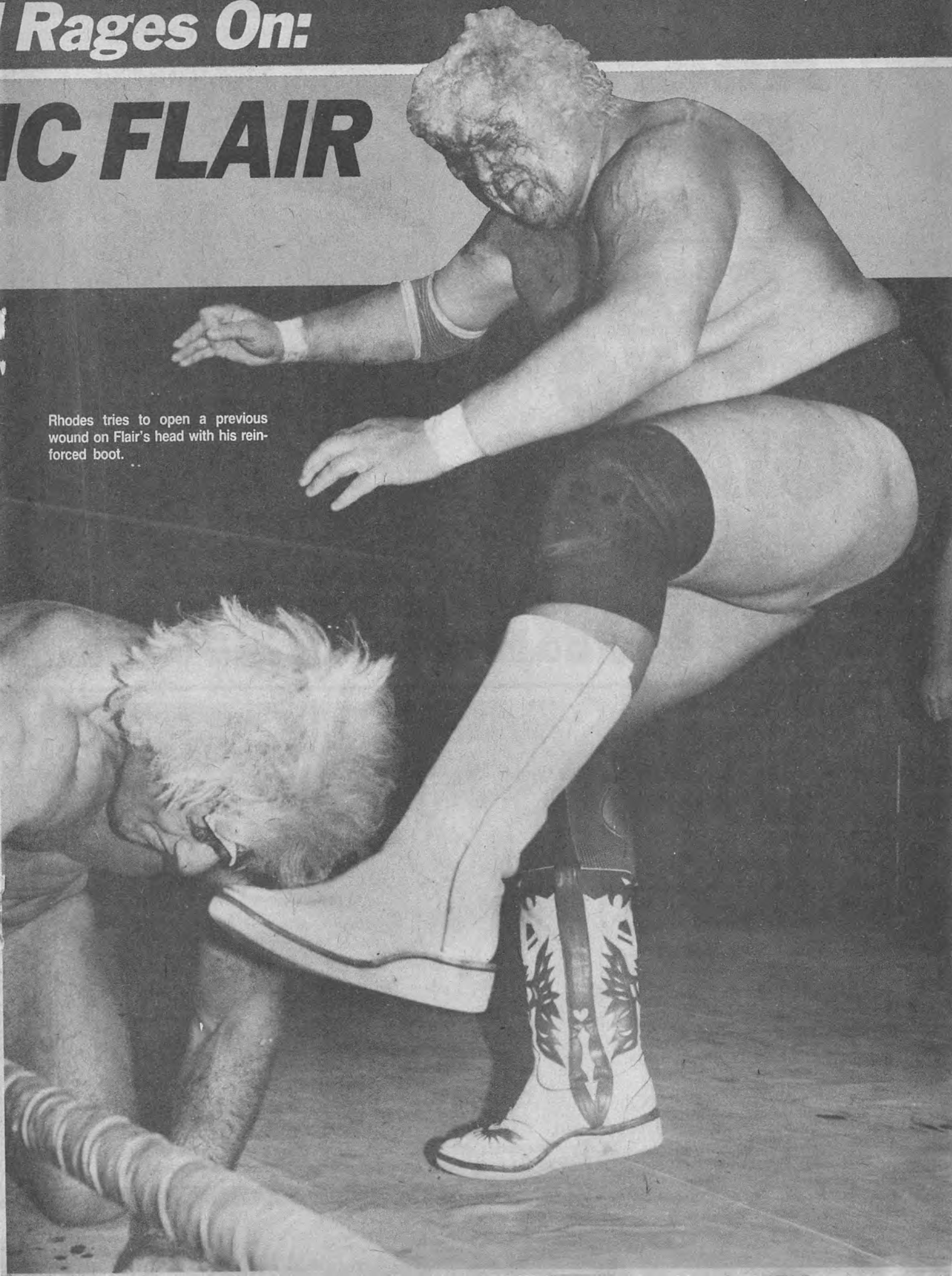
Dusty Rhodes was sprawled comfortably on the couch in his den. A sturdy coffee table was set next to the couch, and Dusty rested his left leg on

(Continued on page 52)

Rages On:

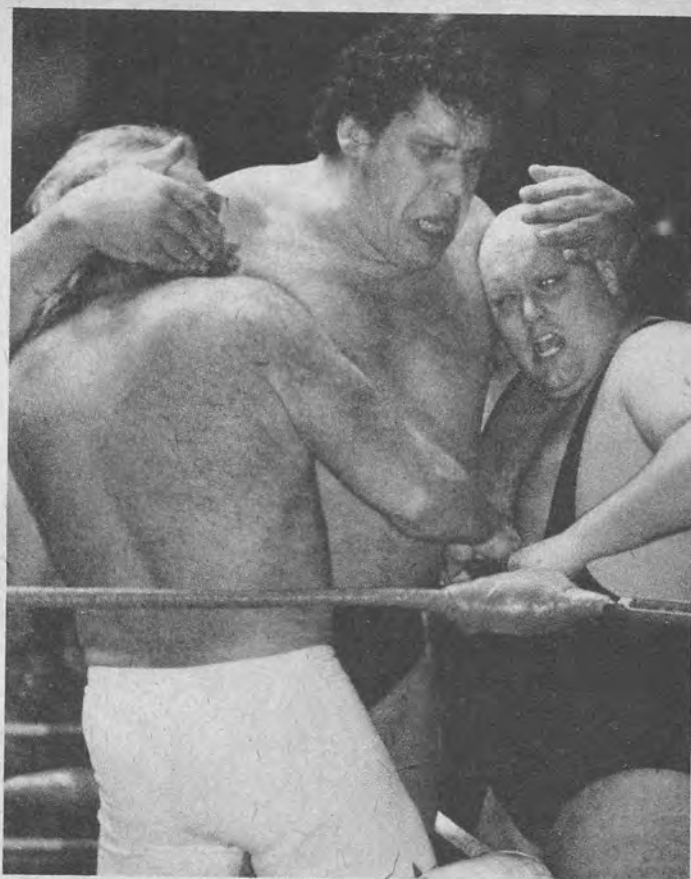
IC FLAIR

Rhodes tries to open a previous wound on Flair's head with his reinforced boot.



Andre's Battle Plan:

SLAY TWO GIANTS TO



Andre had to knock off John Studd and King Kong Bundy

CAPTURE A WEASEL

BOYLE HENDRICKSON LIT a big fat Te-Amo and proposed a toast. "To my mother, Freida, who can't be with us here celebratin' today 'cause she's in St. Agnes' gettin' her gallbladder taken out. I love ya, Ma."

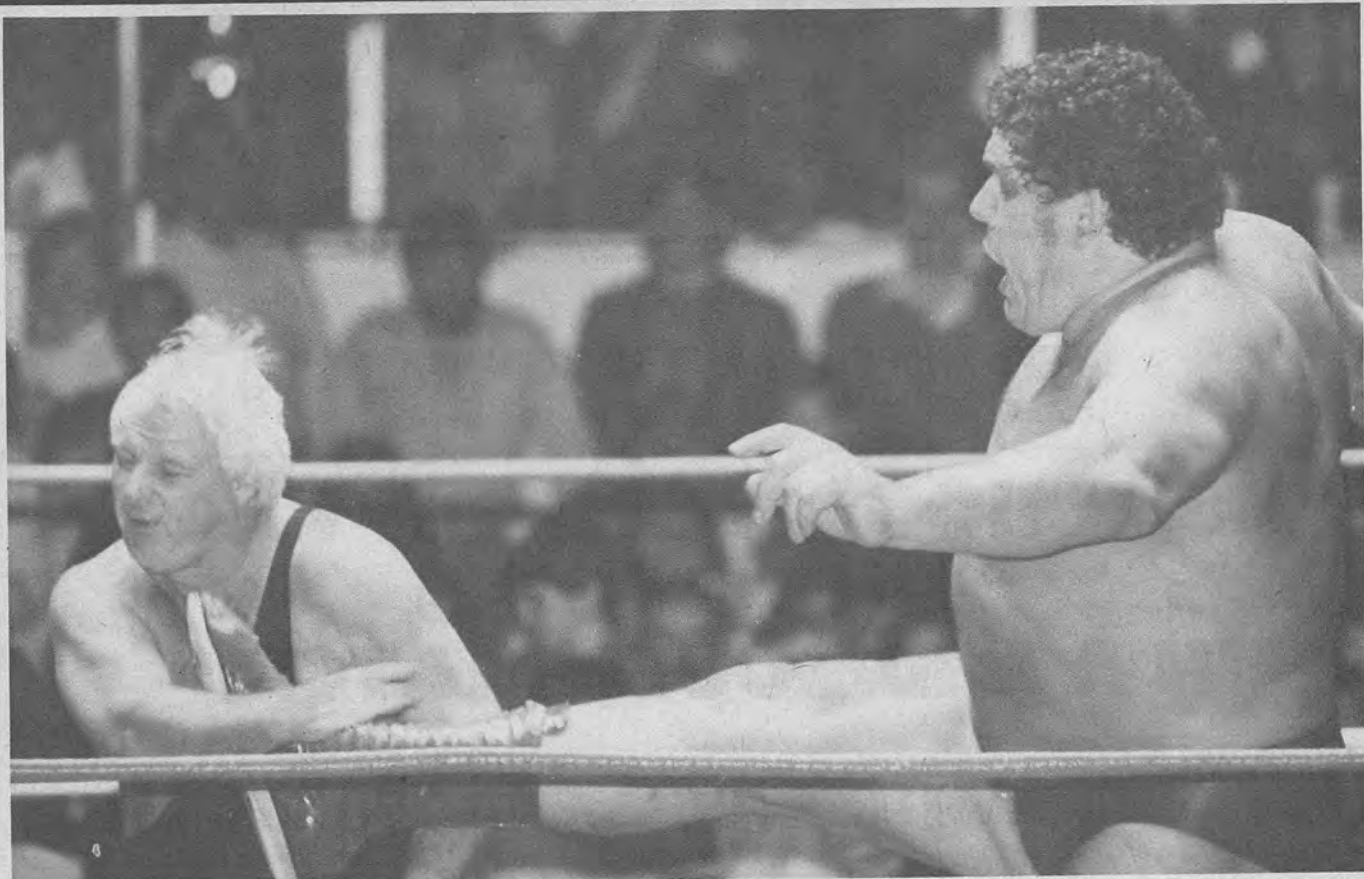
The group clanged their wine glasses together in a riotous explosion of mirth and returned to their separate islands of thought. Boyle turned to his brother-in-law Bobo, looked him affectionately in the eye, and said, "Bobo, if you didn't lend me that deuce, I never woulda bought me that Lotto ticket. Imagine that! Fourteen grand down the tubes!

"Don't you worry now, Bobo. I ain't gonna forget you. You're in for a cut. Don't you worry."

After 36 years of drudgery



Bundy is defenseless against a raging Andre the Giant. It takes a lot to get the Giant angry. Those who do usually regret it for the rest of their careers—if they have any.



... before he could sink his feet into Bobby Heenan.

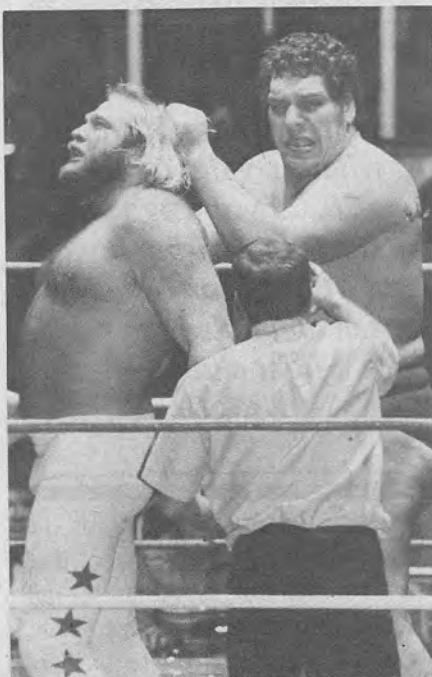
Andre the Giant had to plow through 800 pounds of protection, but when the smoke cleared, it was Bobby Heenan who felt the weight of the Giant's wrath

Photos by David Fitzgerald

dipped in misery, Boyle Hendrickson finally hit it big. The Instant Lottery paid him a cool \$14,000, which was more money than he had ever dreamed of having at once.

He was good to his word and didn't forget his brother-in-law. After clearing his debts, Boyle used the remaining \$9,000 to purchase the equipment the two men needed to start their own cleaning service. They harvested dirt from all over town. Auditoriums, gymnasiums, and ballrooms shined in their wake. They scrubbed banquet halls and sanitized arenas. The men loved the after-party more than the party itself, and their prices were so low they soon had more work than they could handle.

As lifelong wrestling enthusiasts,



Andre would like to rip off Studd's hair and carry it around in a paper bag for a while. The referee issues a warning.

Boyle and Bobo loved working the arenas after a wrestling match. Their crew could spot shine a 10,000-seat building in under four hours, while Boyle and Bobo rummaged around ringside for souvenirs.

The residual filth of a wrestling match is unlike the garbage of any other sporting event. In less than six months, Boyle recovered 11 different foreign objects, eight teeth, sixteen pieces of torn clothing, two blood-soaked bandanas, four chains, two pair of sunglasses, a shredded boot, a bottle of perfume, two canes, a tennis racket, and the AWA championship belt ("Martel threw it under the ring and forgot about it," Bobo explained). They returned the belt.

(Continued on page 56)

HOTSEAT

BILL WATTS

"HULK HOGAN COULDN'T LAST FIVE MINUTES IN A MID-SOUTH MATCH!"

BILL WATTS HAS lived and breathed professional wrestling for the better part of three decades. Following his 1962 ring debut, "Cowboy" Bill Watts quickly earned a reputation as one of the sport's toughest grapplers. Throughout the '60s and '70s, the Oklahoma Stampede—Watts' own form of bulldog—became one of the most feared weapons in the sport.

Today, Watts has cut down drastically on his active wrestling, but not on his participation in the sport. As president of Mid-South Wrestling, Watts heads one of the most successful promotions in the country. The Mid-South television program has been ranked by Arbitron as the highest-rated syndicated sports program in the country, and live cards of Mid-South wrestling draw millions of fans each year.

Watts is an outspoken individual with strong opinions on the sport and the people who are shaping wrestling today, particularly WWF head Vince McMahon. Associate Editor Craig Peters recently spoke with Watts by phone from Vail, Colorado. Sitting on the second story of his three-story condo, Watts took a break in between skiing lessons to speak with Peters about McMahon and the changing state of wrestling today.

Q: I think a good place to start, Bill, would be your general views on the state of wrestling today as a former wrestler and president of Mid-South Wrestling.

A: Well, I think certainly wrestling has in some ways expanded. In most major markets that have cable, there's up to 18 hours per week of

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Vince McMahon's doing just what they did to boxing some 20, 25 years ago when they started televising boxing out of Madison Square Garden and killed the small fight clubs.

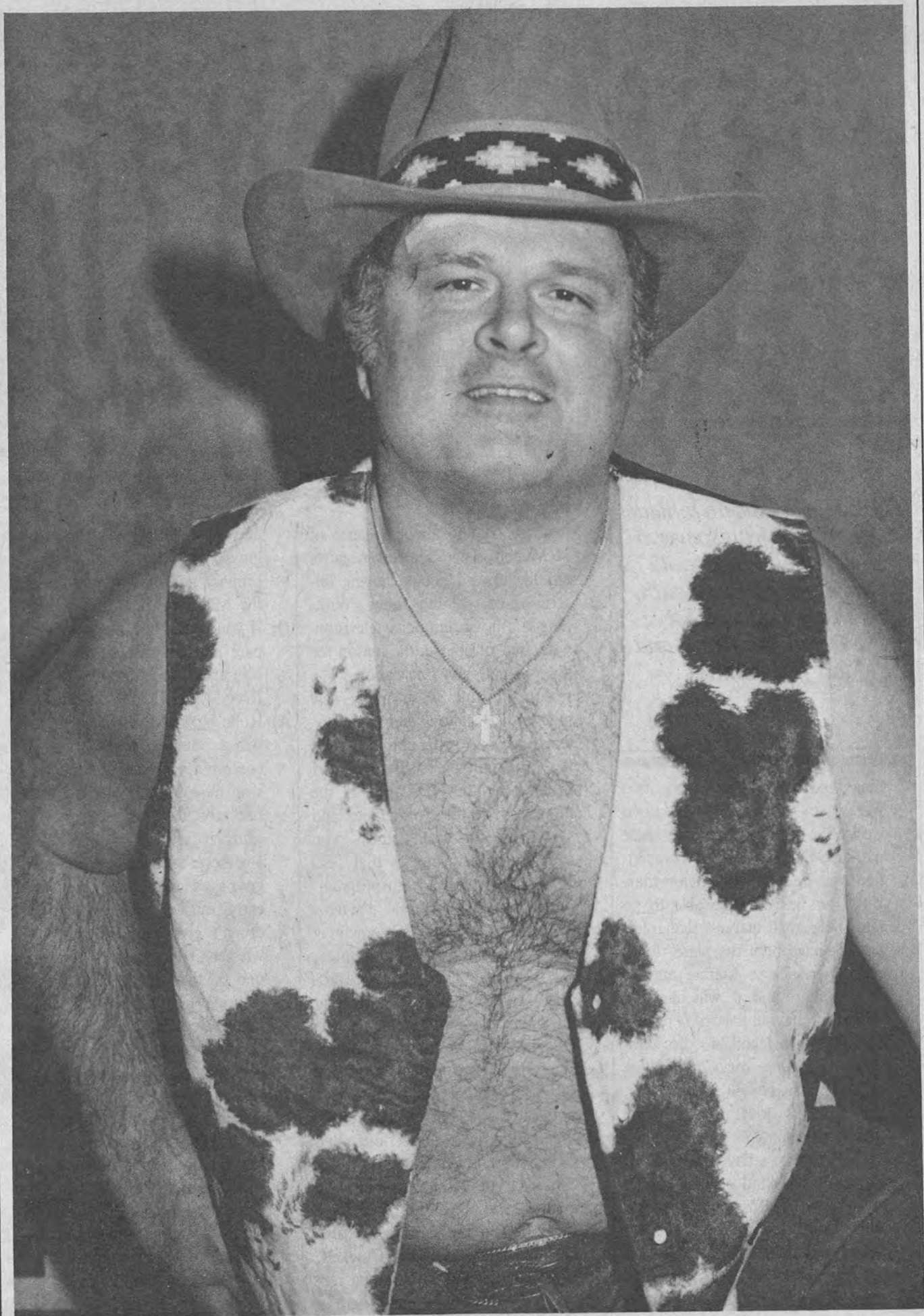
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wrestling on television. So for the television wrestling aficionado, that is fantastic. But as far as for an actual promoter, at some point that 18 hours of free wrestling per week becomes a negative, because people can fulfill or satiate their desire to see wrestling at home. Now what that's going to do is

change the face of wrestling where smaller markets become a thing of the past. The big markets will be the only places where you'll be able to make enough money for the costs that are involved in promoting wrestling. And you'll only be able to go to the major markets less times. So, in the long run, the consumer who wants to see live wrestling may suffer.

Q: Obviously, Vince McMahon has been the cause of a lot of this.

A: Well, certainly. He's been very smart, very brilliant in his game plan. He's doing just what they did to boxing some 20, 25 years ago when they started televising live boxing out of Madison Square Garden and killed the small fight clubs. In the Mid-South area, we've already quit running some of the smaller towns. Of course, when you say "smaller town," it depends on what your definition of a smaller town is. To Vince McMahon, a small town could be half a million people. He ran Oklahoma City five times last year, and that's a million people, and he only ran Houston seven times the previous 12 months, and that's a giant town. Whereas we're accustomed to run-





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Hulk Hogan has no athletic background whatsoever. I don't think Hulk could come down to Mid-South, get in the ring with Steve 'Dr. Death' Williams, and last five minutes.

”

ning Oklahoma City every two weeks, or Houston every two weeks. So as he comes into these markets, that's where the competition will be, in these major markets. But he won't be able to go into these small markets that traditionally have been the places for a young wrestler to mature and to come along, and it will also cut down on the number of wrestlers needed. When I got into pro wrestling, there were over 20 booking offices in the United States alone, and now it's down to maybe six major offices.

Q: Do you foresee a day where all this expansion will kind of explode and collapse on itself?

A: Well, I don't know. I hate to be a pessimist. I think that the guys that are really sharp will survive and do well. There's a lot of new things



Terry Taylor uses his leg strength to bridge off the mat in an attempt to break free of Steve Williams' headlock. Watts feels that the caliber of wrestling in the Mid-South is far superior to that in the WWF.

that are coming about because of McMahon. There's a less negative attitude toward people buying advertising on wrestling shows. Wrestling is a hot commodity television-wise, but, of course, the reason for that is not just McMahon. The reason for that is so many new independent stations and cable systems needing programming. And the programming is drying up. I mean, after they've played all the thousands of titles of movies and everything that's in stock, you can't make new movies that fast. You can't get new, fresh programming. Wrestling is fresh, it's new, it's not repeats, it's something that's ongoing, and it gets tremendous ratings. The television programmers are starting to find that out, and now even some of the advertisers are starting to realize it.

Q: Wrestling fans might not realize that Mid-South is the highest-rated syndicated show in the country.

A: We are the number-one-rated sports show in America today, according to the Arbitron syndication analysis. Yet we haven't been able to go up on the satellite or cable like McMahon or [Jim] Crockett. Eventually, somebody's gonna recognize the quality of our program,

and we will finally get some of this gravy, so to speak. However, our primary goal has been to promote the Mid-South area.

Q: If you could, in a few words, compare and contrast the three major champions in wrestling: Ric Flair, Rick Martel, and Hulk Hogan.

A: Hulk Hogan I've watched. Without a doubt he's got tremendous charisma. He's an exciting, explosive, huge guy. He has no athletic background whatsoever. I've watched several of his matches; I've never seen one of his matches go past eight minutes, and that's entry, music, and departure. So he doesn't give over five minutes of wrestling. Now, that because of one of two things: Either they're booking him against a bunch of bums, or he's so much better he can beat everybody in the world in five minutes. And I don't buy that. Hulk Hogan couldn't last five minutes in a Mid-South match. I don't think Hulk could come down to Mid-South, get in the ring with "Dr. Death" Steve Williams, and last five minutes. Or Butch Reed. Or Jim Duggan. I think any one of those three guys would clean his clock. As a matter of fact, he wouldn't get in the ring with them.

He backed down from a challenge in New York from Bob Backlund, who was a former WWF man! To me, Hulk Hogan is a tremendous piece of showbiz propaganda. McMahon has done a fantastic job of marketing him. And the sad thing is, in this country today if you tell somebody long enough and hard enough on television what you want them to believe, they'll start believing it. The guy in the street thinks Hulk Hogan is the world champion, and that's a travesty.

Q: Rick Martel?

A: Rick Martel I don't know that well. I have not used Rick Martel. We've used Nick Bockwinkel in Houston when he was the AWA World champion. I've known Nick for a long, long time, he's got an athletic background. Martel looks to be an athlete—from what I understand he is very athletic, and does some great moves. But I can't really give you my opinion of him, because I haven't been around him.

Q: Ric Flair I know you're very familiar with.

A: I've known Flair since he started in this business. He's spent a lot of time in it, he's paid his dues. He is

in tremendous condition. I've seen him go an hour, I've seen him go 40, 35 minutes. It kind of reminds me of Dory Funk Jr., who used to say, "If I take a guy past 35 minutes, he can't beat me." Flair can't go out there and overpower anybody, he's got to go out there and use endurance, tactics, psychology, and stay in that match. And he's a master at it. He's done very, very well.

Q: Flair wrestles often in the Mid-South area . . .

A: Well, I'd like to see Hulk Hogan come into the Mid-South area and wrestle some of the Mid-South stars, too. But as you know, that's impossible, because McMahon will never let that happen. [Verne] Gagne offered to put \$100,000 up if Hulk Hogan would get in the ring with Bob Backlund, and they wouldn't even take it. So you see, he's very, very protected, he's only booked against people that Titan Sports controls. Now I'm not a member of the NWA; when Flair comes into my area, he wrestles my wrestlers. They're under no ties to the NWA at all. I'm an independent promotion. So therefore, when he comes into our area and



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I'd like to see Hulk Hogan come into the Mid-South area and wrestle some of the Mid-South stars. But, as you know, that's impossible, because McMahon will never let it happen.

”

As president of Mid-South wrestling, Bill Watts works long hours in his Bixby, Oklahoma, office. As we conducted this interview, he was taking his first vacation in years.



wrestles and defends that title, his butt's on the line. This is something McMahon won't do, he won't cross those lines. Everyone Hulk Hogan wrestles is strictly WWF.

Q: Are there ever times you think about quitting professional wrestling completely?

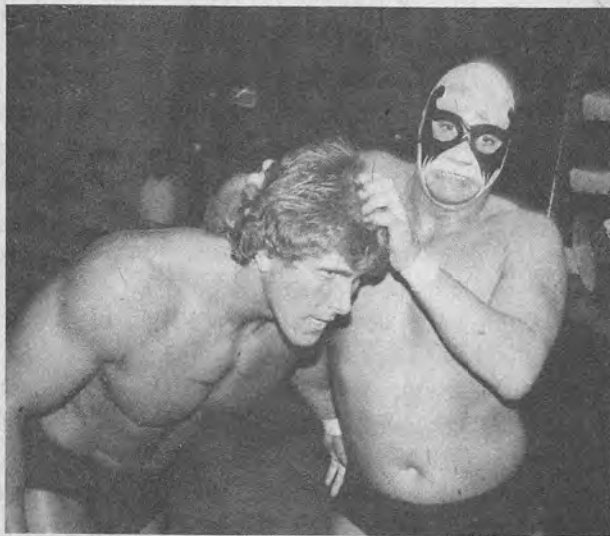
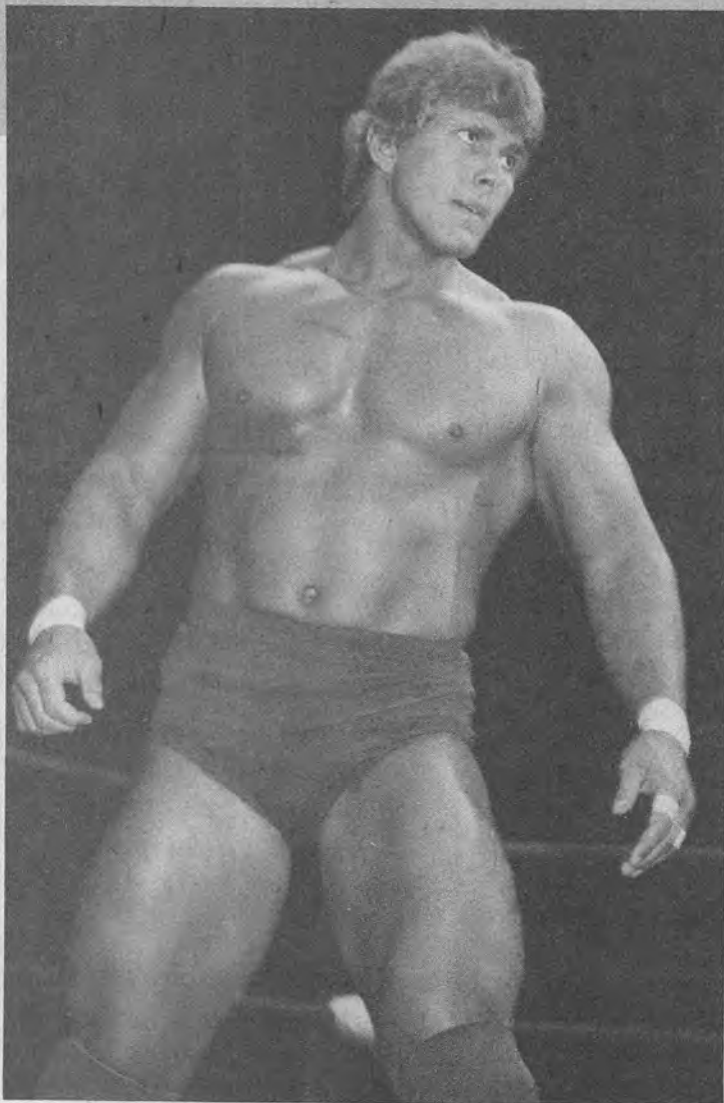
A: I've considered selling out or retiring and just relaxing, because wrestling's been very good to me. I'm well invested, I've got a lot of property. Some of the things I see about wrestling today are so negative they're very discouraging. But some of the new things I see about it, I want to stay around it just to see what happens.

Q: It really is quite a rollercoaster.

A: Yes it is, but I guess if we had a crystal ball it wouldn't be nearly as exciting. □

ARE THE VON ERICHS THEIR FALL

Photos by Buddy Myers



If the Von Erichs are making Lance their sacrificial lamb, Gino Hernandez would be happy to do the sacrificing. Gino works Lance over outside the ring (above).

Is Fritz Von Erich setting up his nephew Lance to take the brunt of every rulebreaker's assault? According to Gino Hernandez that's exactly the Von Erich plan and judging from Lance's brutal schedule, he might have a point

GINO HERMANDEZ GAZED forthrightly into the cameras, his smile threatening to dislodge his mask, something that his opponent, Lance Von Erich, tried to do, and almost died in the attempt. Hernandez spoke as a man possessed, his being consumed by an unholy vision.

"All hail this body beautiful! Forever worship this mask, this person, this piece of perfection! I have exposed the Von Erichs as the trembling cowards they are. They would sacrifice one of their kin to save their own hides. Feeding a rook like Lance to me is like throwing the Christians to the lions. He doesn't have a chance.

"Now maybe the world will take note of what Kevin and Kerry Von Erich really stand for. Spell it out. M-u-d. They eat it, roll in it, dress up in it, and serve it to their fans. They're nothing and never have been. Chris Adams' been telling people that for years. Now I suspect people will listen more carefully."

In his wake was left the rumbling echos of a rumor too hot to fade. Ever since his debut in the World Class area several months ago, Lance Von Erich has wrestled opponents sharing particulars like experience, strength, knowledge, and savvy, not to mention a rare penchant for brutality.

The roster of Lance's opponents reads like a Who's Who of Texas wrestling: So far he's battled The Grappler, Gino Hernandez, Killer Brooks, and NWA champion Ric Flair, men who have been in and out of rings many years longer than Von Erich. Most newcomers to the area are weaned slowly to the ferocious pace of the World Class; Lance Von Erich wrestled Flair in his first month in the area.

There were two prevailing theories for Lance's sudden emergence in main events, before Hernandez offered his third. One was that his tenure in Portland under the name of Ricky Vaughn provided him with all the experience he needed. Pa-

MAKING COUSIN LANCE GUY?

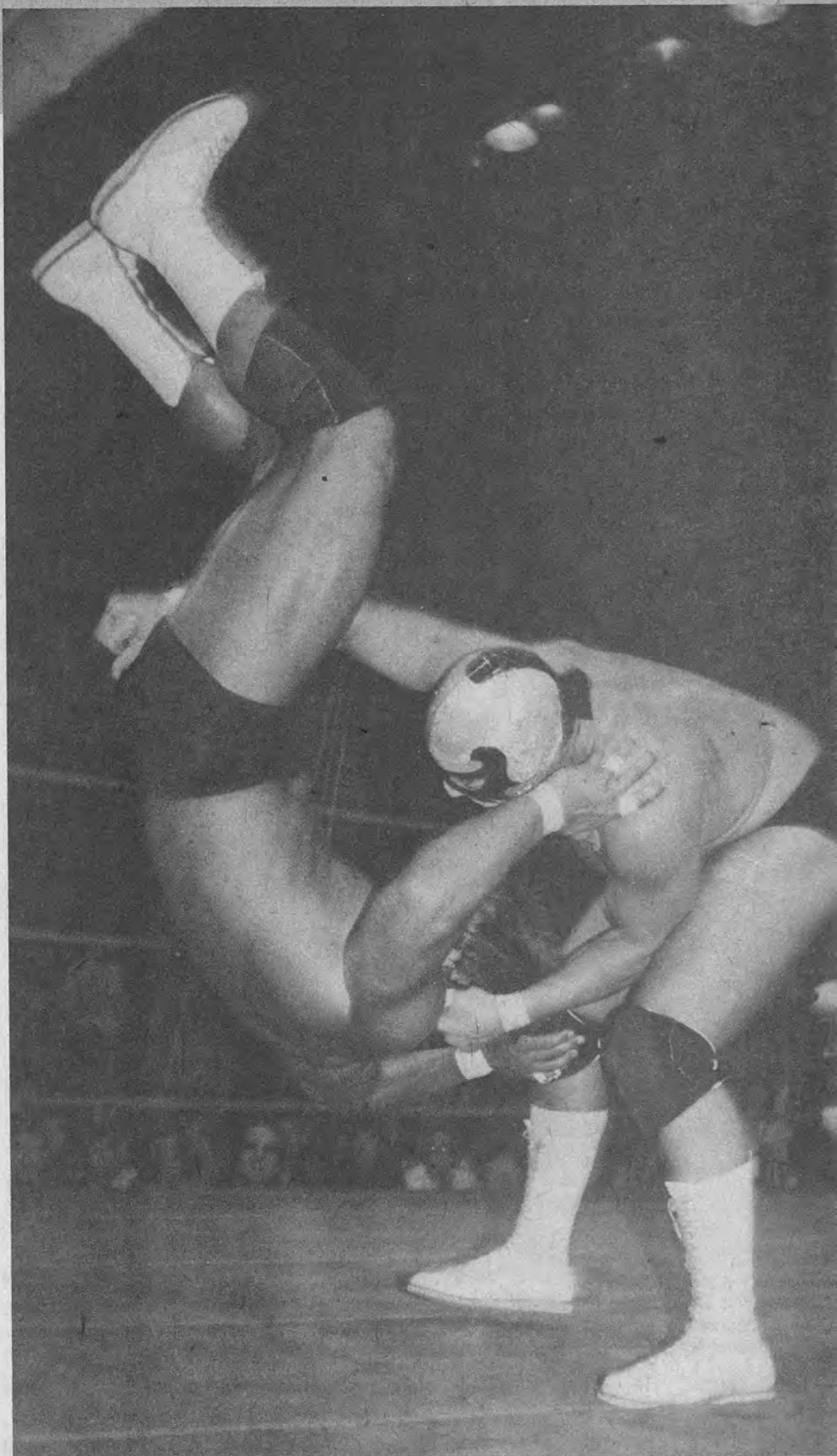
cific Northwest promoter Don Owens supports this theory, saying, "Ricky learned his craft well in Portland. He came here green and left a champion. He made everyone proud while he was champion. Everyone underestimates us out here. Truth is, a lot of wrestlers have cemented their reputations in the Northwest. Ricky is capable of wrestling with anyone in the world. I'm not surprised at all with his success."

Then there's the *You Can't Argue With Mother's Milk* hypothesis, which pays reverence to the Von Erich gene pool. Members of wrestling's first family, the theory argues, are exempt from the arduous climb up the ladder of success. Their heritage has endowed them with a natural ability that allows them to take the elevator to superstardom.

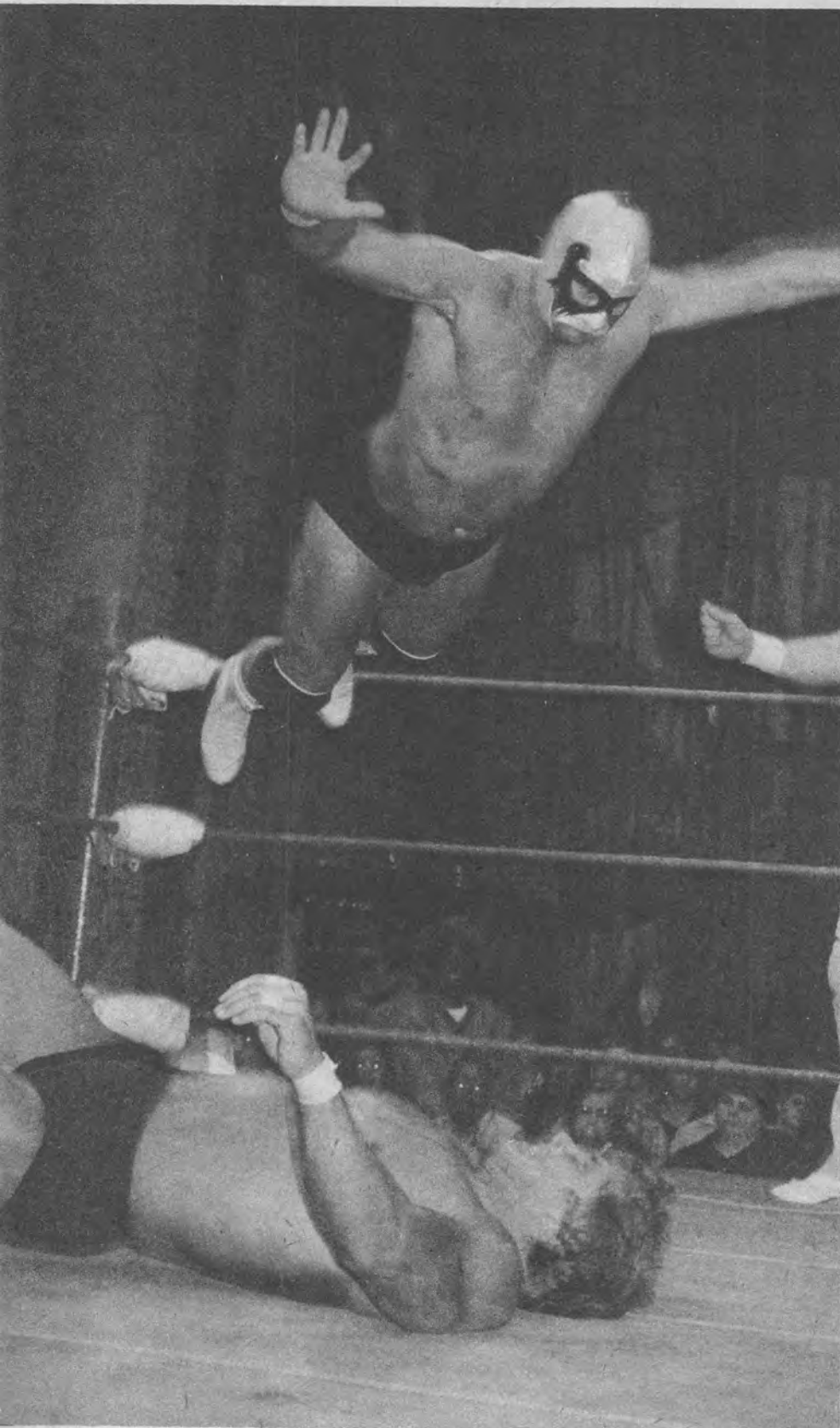
Both theories make sense when applied to Lance Von Erich. He *did* develop in Portland, moving gracefully from prelims to main events to the Pacific Northwest championship. And he *is* a Von Erich, and despite any negative connotation that the name conjurs for Gino Hernandez, he cannot argue with their success over the generations.

Until Hernandez steamrolled Lance recently, this Von Erich had held his own against every contender he had wrestled. "The kid surprised the hell out of me," admitted Flair. "I figured I'd make an example out of the kid. I took him for a punk. I figured the only reason he got a title shot was because his uncle Fritz pulled some strings."

"In all fairness, I'd have to say that Lance is far ahead of both Kerry and Kevin at this stage of his



Hernandez, executing a bodyslam, claims that Lance is not ready for the caliber of opponents he has been given. NWA World champion Ric Flair, for one, disagrees.



Von Erich braces himself for a flying Hernandez. At this stage in his career, Von Erich cannot be expected to defeat a world-class veteran like Gino every time they meet. Hernandez, however, doesn't think Lance belongs in the same ring with him.

career. He wrestles much older than he really is."

The quote from Flair, who is as generous with his compliments as he is with his title belt, is convinc-

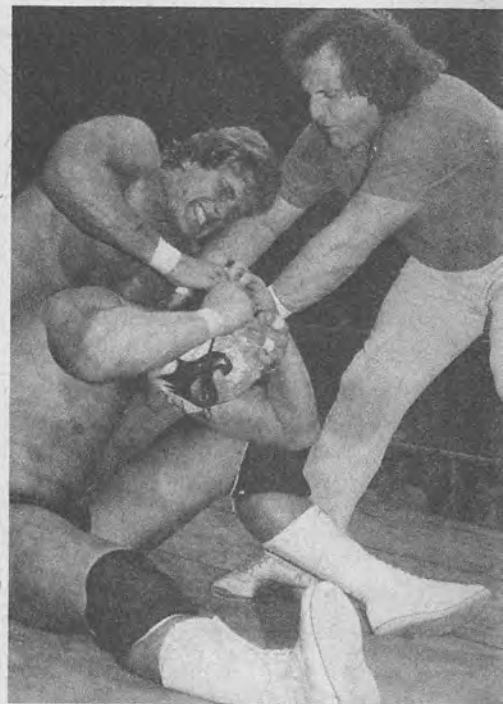
ing, but still could not win over Hernandez.

"Bullcrap!" he roared, upon hearing Flair's comments. "Flair is playing politics, as usual. He knows

Fritz would rather sacrifice Lance than one of his own boys. It all goes back to the falling out he and his bubbleheaded brother Waldo had way back when. Now Fritz is getting back at him by throwing Lance in with the big boys.

"I don't care. I'd rather be chewing on the K boys than a rook like Lance, but I'll take a slab of Von Erich meat whenever I can get it. If Big Daddy Fritz keeps this up, there won't be anymore Lance to beat up on soon."

Lance finds all this yap ridiculous. "All a gimp like Gino can do



Von Erich made the rookie mistake of concentrating his efforts on unmasking his opponent. It would cost him several advantages.

is talk. He can't wrestle, can't fight, and can't comb his hair. All he can do is try to stir up trouble out of the ring, since he's helpless in the ring. Better people than Gino Hernandez have tried to rip this family apart. It'll do him no good. We're too close for that to happen.

"He's just jealous that I'm fighting for the NWA title while he's running around with a stupid mask on his head. The next time we wrestle I'll put the fear of God into him. That's a lock.

"No one violates a Von Erich without paying the price." □

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AFTER 48 HOURS

- Nerve endings start regrowing
- Ability to smell and taste things is enhanced

AFTER 72 HOURS

- Bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier
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WITHIN 2 WEEKS TO 3 MONTHS

- Circulation improves
- Walking becomes easier
- Lung function increases up to 30 percent

1 TO 9 MONTHS

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The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off . . . One on One

ONE ON ONE



"You submitted! You done cried for your mommy and gave up the title. I didn't think you'd squat that low!"

—Stan Hansen

FOR OVER A year and a half, Rick Martel successfully defended his AWA World heavyweight title and earned a distinguished reputation for scientific excellence in the face of dozens of challengers. On December 29, 1985, in East Rutherford, New Jersey, Martel's title reign came to an end.

For much of November and December, Stan Hansen had been Martel's most determined challenger. The hatred between the two men reached a violent crescendo on Christmas night in St. Paul: During their title match, Hansen dragged Martel out of the ring, slammed him back-first into the steel cornerpost several times, and battered Martel's spine with a steel chair.

When Martel stepped into the ring in New Jersey's Brendan Byrne Meadowlands Arena four days later, he was wrestling injured. A lesser champion might have taken some time off from the ring to allow himself to recuperate. Martel was not a lesser champion.

In the Meadowlands match, Hansen's attack was relentless. "The Bad Man from Borger, Texas" concentrated his attack on Martel's injured back, pummeling the champion with an awe-inspiring series of suplexes and saltos.

Finally, Hansen captured Martel in the "Brazos Valley backbreaker," his

version of the Boston crab. Martel, fearing a career-threatening back injury, opted to submit the match—and his world title—to Hansen.

On the day after the match, *Inside Wrestling* was fortunate to be able to contact both men via telephone and have them discuss this match . . . "One on One."

STAN HANSEN:

So, how does it feel to be an ex-champion, you stupid Canuck?

RICK MARTEL:

Hansen, I know you want to peeve me. I know you want . . .

SH: I don't have to peeve you, little girl! I damn near crippled you last night, and I took your greasy

belt and strapped it around my waist, boy. I'm World champion, boy. How does that make you feel, boy?

RM: Like I was about to say, Hansen, I knew you'd want to gloat about it. That is the difference between you and I, Hansen. You weigh 300 pounds, and you are strong, but you have the heart and soul of a child.

SH: What are you talkin' about, boy? Did them doctors feed you some of them funny pills for your back and mess your little peabrain up? *Haw!*

RM: Shut your mouth, Hansen. I am man enough to call you on the aftermath of your victory. You

N ONE



"I will admit that you were the best man last night. My mistake was only to take the match, with my injuries."

—Rick Martel

should be man enough to listen.

SH: I don't have enough to listen to no moosehead scum who ain't man enough to save his title! You flamin' sissy boy, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for givin' it up! You *submitted* to me, son! You done cried for your mommy and gave up the title. You don't deserve to be champion. I knew you wrestled like a lady, but I didn't think you'd squat *that* low! Submittin' your damn title away—*shoooooot!*

RM: Hansen, I've run across your type all my life. I've had all kinds of jerks come up to me with empty threats on their lips. They think that I . . .

SH: Empty threats? I made good on my threat, boy, I whupped your Canuck butt for the title!

RM: You shut your redneck mouth! Yes, I'll stoop to name-calling if you continue to insult my French-Canadian heritage. Look, Hansen, I respect you as a wrestler, and I will admit that you were the best man last night. You won fairly, without cheating. My mistake was only to take the match, with my injuries, because I did not want to let my fans down on such an important evening. But I accept the burden of my defeat. That is where we differ, *boy*. In all of our previous matches, you complained about the officiating,

the weather, what have you, to excuse your failure . . .

SH: I never failed! Holy crap, I'll whup on you with this belt just like I whup on my fat ol' ugly wife Emma Lou when she don't make my chili hot enough . . .

RM: That is why you're not man enough to wear a championship belt. It takes a man to admit his weaknesses. When I lose, I admit I am not perfect. When you lose, you complain. You lash out at the fans, the officials, and even your own family. That signifies the worst cowardice. You are talented, but you disgrace yourself with your juvenile ranting and raving.

SH: Mighty big words I'm hearin' from a little washed-up goon from Queer-bec City. You can't even get up out of bed to brush your pretty white teeth and use that little ol' trainin' potty of yours with the swans on it 'cause I broke your back. I got a wife and nine kids, I ain't no juvenile. Who's takin' care of you while you're in traction?

RM: I'm not in traction, but I'm making sure I'll be in triple-A condition next time I meet you in the ring. Your taunts don't annoy me in the slightest. You're a desperate man. You know the Stan Hansen championship era won't last long. I give it a couple of months, tops.

SH: You're nuts. You must be one of them suicidal types. Face facts, lady. You don't belong in the same ring with a man like Stan Hansen. You don't even belong on the same connection. I'm hangin' up. (*Click.*)

RM: Go ahead, Hansen. No bully can stand to hear the truth about himself. I may be an ex-champion, but I am still a proud man. Like any arrogant macho fool, you are eternally frightened. I am confident. You cannot keep that title from me for long. □

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 6)



Magnificent Muraco feels the effects of Rick Steamboat's scissoring legs. Howard Walsdorff is pleased with The Dragon's new style.

feud between Steamboat and Flair in the Mid-Atlantic states several years ago. Today Steamboat and Flair are very good friends, but in the past their battles in the squared circle were very much like the battles between Steamboat and Muraco today. Since both Steamboat and Muraco are Hawaiians, as pointed out in your article, their feud is unusually different from the average wrestling feud.

I collect magazines with pictures and articles about Rick Steamboat and always look forward to future features on this wrestler. He is one of the most interesting contemporary wrestlers. In my opinion, he is the best wrestler today. His new "image" he acquired in the WWF seems to be successful, and my friends and I like it. I am speaking of his ninja attire that he wears to the ring, and the addition of karate (within the rules of the WWF) that he now uses.

HOWARD WALSDORFF
Green Brier, TN

WWF FAT FARM

If you ask me, the WWF shouldn't stand for "World Wrestling Federation," it should stand for "where wrestlers fatten."

I can't believe what's happened to so many of my favorite wrestlers over the last couple of years. Andre the Giant, while never a poster boy for Jack LaLanne, has developed a belly that threatens to touch his toes—something

(Continued on page 50)

Wrestling 86

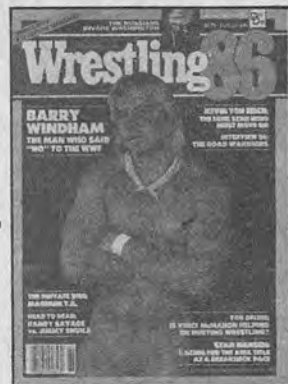
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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 49)



Andre the Giant, once in very good shape, has let himself go completely. Roger Larabee sees the same happening to quite a few WWF wrestlers.

I'm sure Andre hasn't done in years. Magnificent Muraco, once an agile athlete and perhaps the most dangerous man anywhere in wrestling, has become an overblown and puffy caricature of what he once was. Adrian Adonis, another man who never was in fantastic shape, used to have a body that was at least firm; now, Adonis' barrel chest makes him look ridiculous, and the waves of fat that wash over his stomach prevent me from taking him seriously as a wrestler anymore.

And now the same thing is happening to Hercules Hernandez. Any wrestling fan who remembers Hercules from his Mid-South days about a year and a half ago will recall that the man had a beautiful physique. Hernandez's washboard belly was ample proof of the fact that he worked out every day. But now that he's wrestling in the WWF, Hernandez has lost his physique and is beginning to gain a lot of weight.

It's truly a sad thing to see.

ROGER LARABEE
Philadelphia

RATINGS WAR

This letter concerns the Tuesday night ratings war between the AWA on ESPN and the WWF on the USA network.

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I watch the AWA show, because *Prime Time Wrestling* stinks, like all the other WWF shows do. Who wants to watch preliminary bums like S.D. Jones, Rene Goulet, and Barry O every week? The WWF seems determined to not put good matches on television. They must think that the fans have the I.Q. of a pebble to watch their stupid garbage. At least the AWA shows great matches like The Fabulous Freebirds vs. The Road Warriors.

And the AWA isn't afraid to put their champion, Rick Martel, on television. Hulk Hogan is rarely on TV to wrestle; you're more likely to find him



Rick Martel executes a spinecrusher against Michael Hayes. Reader Ben Corrigan has a great deal of respect for Martel and the entire AWA.

on *The A-Team* or *The Tonight Show*. Hogan hasn't even defended the WWF title in Madison Square Garden for about five months!

I think Hogan takes wrestling, his title, and the fans too much for granted these days. In my opinion, the Hulkster is the biggest geek in wrestling. Rick Martel is a true world champion who works hard at defending the AWA title. Martel deserves far more attention than Hogan does.

I hope the AWA blows the WWF off the airwaves on Tuesday nights, because they most certainly deserve it.

BEN CORRIGAN
Johnstown, PA ☐

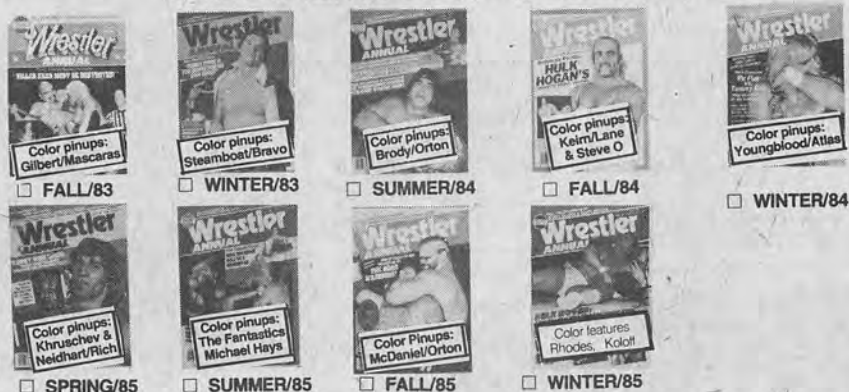
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DUSTY/FLAIR

(Continued from page 34)



There is rarely any letup when these two men step into the ring together. Flair will survive Rhodes' sleeper and moments later assume a lengthy offensive of his own.

the top of it.

"Let me tell you 'bout my doc, who says I still have to take it easy when I'm out of the ring," Dusty explained. "I can wrestle, you see, he's given me his okay for that, but I wrestle with pain. And it takes a while for that pain to go away after every match, so I still have to take care of things when I'm not wrestling so that I'll reach full recovery that much faster. It'll be months before I'm back to brand-new again, but I'll get there, don't you worry."

So much for the update on Dusty's leg, injured at the hands of Flair and the Andersons. What about his feud with Flair and the Starrcade controversy?

"I'll tell you something, daddy, I'll let Flair have that one," Dusty said. "He can have that one for the record books, because that match doesn't end a damn thing, it *starts* things in my book, you hear what I'm saying? Millions of people know, daddy, millions of people saw me pin Flair in the mid-

dle of the ring. I know it can be done, Flair knows it can be done, and the people know, daddy, the people know. It's just the beginning, daddy, just the beginning. This is the start of something big, you know what I mean?"

"Because Ricky Flair, daddy, Ricky Flair is gonna pay the price! Yes, daddy, he's gonna pay the price of knocking me down, of laying me up, of putting me out. He's gonna *pay* that price, daddy, and it's gonna be in blood, and it's gonna be with his title. Sometime in 1986, daddy, sometime it's gonna happen, the hammer's gonna fall. And it's gonna fall on Ric Flair's head!"

Dusty will have plenty of opportunities to make good on his vows in 1986. On the one hand, Dusty recently captured the National heavyweight title from Buddy Landell, which places him high on the official NWA ladder of contenders to Flair's title. On the other hand, NWA President Bob Geigel is considering several courses of action in

(Continued on page 54)

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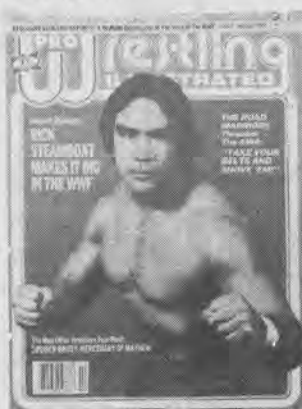
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DUSTY/FLAIR

(Continued from page 52)

the wake of the Starrcade controversy.

"Right now, I haven't made any kind of decision," Geigel told *Inside Wrestling*, "but I've got a few things in mind. I'm not at liberty to discuss them all, but I will say that they all offer a fair and equitable set of re-match opportunities for Rhodes to meet Flair in title situations."

One NWA source reports that Geigel is leaning towards the establishment of a "World Series" between Flair and Rhodes, a set of five, seven, or nine matches that would be held in various cities across the nation. All matches would be wrestled to a positive finish, and the winner of the most matches would receive the NWA title. Flair's lawyers are vehemently fighting that alternative.

To be sure, it appears as if 1986 will be the year for Dusty Rhodes. One way or another, he *will* receive his share of title matches against Flair. The controversy of Starrcade '85 may fade into history, but Dusty's run for the 10 pounds of gold, is only beginning.

The night after the Starrcade match, the two men were back in the ring in St. Louis. The outcome of the match—a draw—was far less significant than the effect that match had on both contestants. Rhodes sustained cuts that, even by Dusty's standards, were horrendous. Flair left the ring clutching





Rhodes, who has mastered the technique of seeing through blood, elbows mashes Flair outside the ring.

his left shoulder and was diagnosed later as having a deep muscle bruise. In the press conference that followed, all Dusty would talk about was getting back in the ring with the champion. Publicly, at least, Flair said he would wrestle Rhodes "anytime, anywhere."

It has been spoken about time and time again how deeply a long-running feud can affect the careers of two wrestlers. In the eyes of the combatants, the winner of this particular feud will cement the position as the top man in the NWA and perhaps all of wrestling. In the eyes of educated observers, there can be no winner in a war of this magnitude. In all likelihood, this feud will not stretch into 1987. □

Flair has the figure-four securely in place. Rhodes, an expert at applying it, is also an expert at reversing it.



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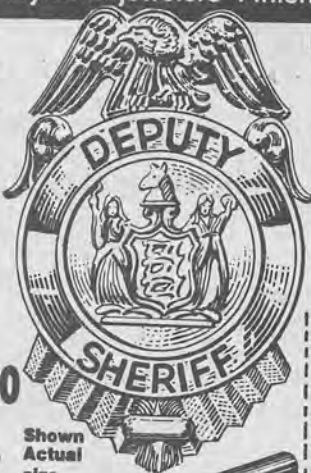
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ANDRE/BUNDY

(Continued from page 37)

The discovery they most treasure is a bag they found one night laying beside the ring. In the bag was a huge clump of Andre the Giant's hair.

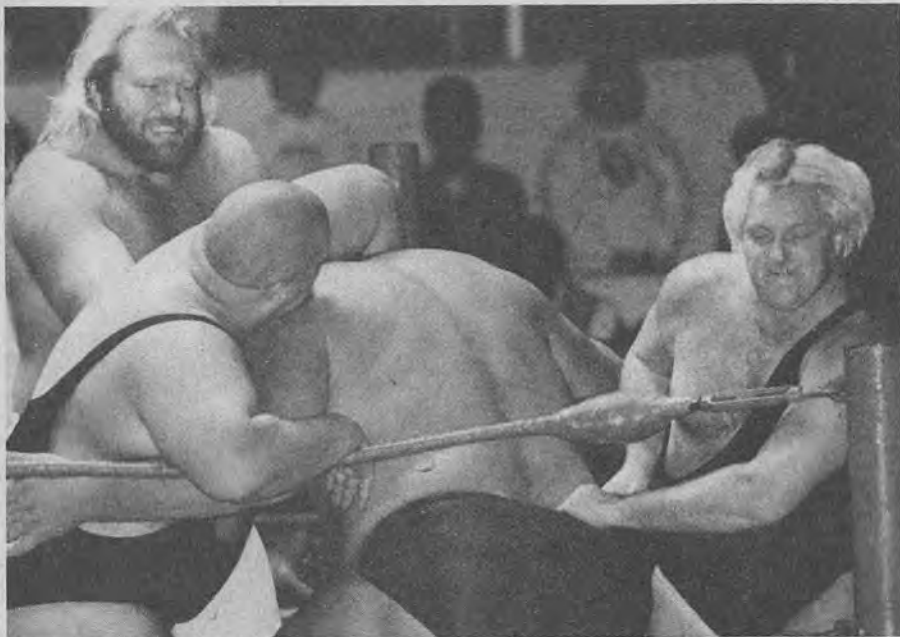
"Bobby Heenan had been carrying it around for weeks and shoving it Andre's face when he wasn't looking," Boyle excitedly revealed. "Andre would try to get to Heenan, but the Weasel would always have King Kong Bundy or John Studd around to protect him.

"Bobo and I had never seen Andre so darn mad before. Heenan realized this also because after a while he always had Studd and Bundy in the ring with him. But one night Andre got him. Oooh, was that something to see. Bundy, Studd, and Weasel all against Andre and they couldn't stop. It was great. Andre gave them what they deserved and Bobo and I got Andre's hair, which Heenan dropped when he fled to the dressing room. What a deal."

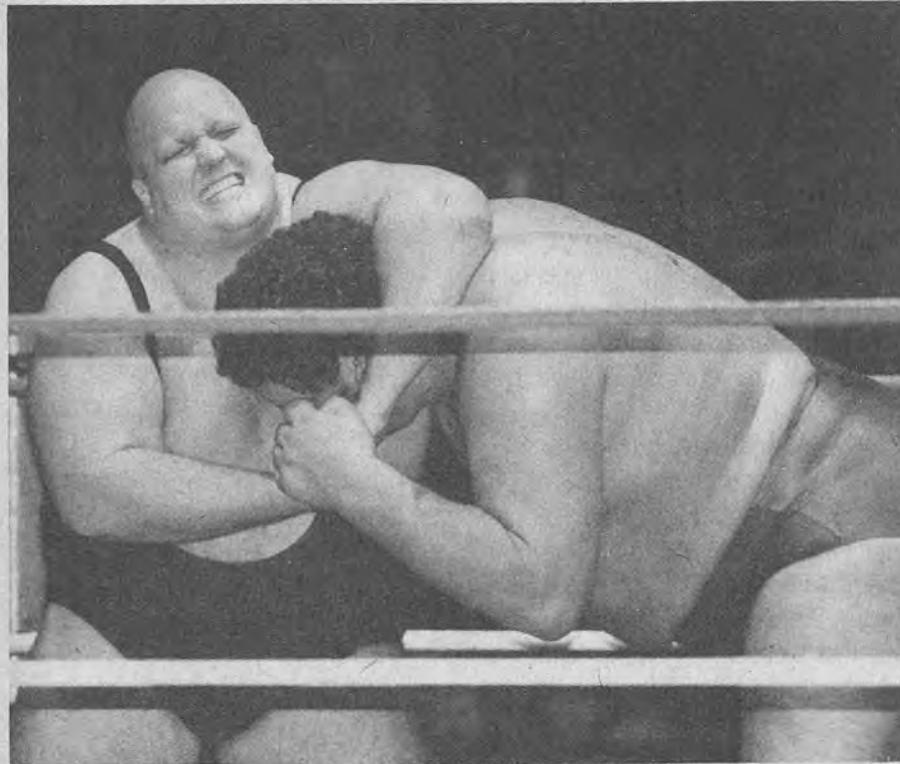
Ever since his hair was ignominiously sheared by Ken Patera, Studd and Heenan, Andre has been consumed by a revenge that has threatened his very life. His reckless assaults on Bobby Heenan have turned the Giant into easy pickings for a Bundy-Studd double-team. Never in his career has Andre embarked on a more ambitious and dangerous venture than trying to singlehandedly conquer 810 pounds of rulebreaking venom so that he might get to Bobby Heenan.

"Usually," Boyle said, "Heenan will always stay out of Andre's reach. I've seen him hide under the ring, sneak behind Bundy, hold a fan hostage, and run to the dressing room to avoid Andre. He's really a snivelin', simperin' weasel.

"You could tell by the look in his eye this night though that Andre meant business. He pulled all the stops. He would have torn the walls



Accustomed to having his way with his opponents, the undefeated Andre has had to accept a great deal more than an embarrassing haircut against Bundy, Studd, and Heenan (above). King Kong brings the Giant down to size with a headlock (below).



of the auditorium down if he had to."

"And think of the mess that would have made," quipped Bobo.

The men were right about this night. Although officially the match was scheduled as a handicapped tag team encounter between Andre and Hillbilly Jim versus Bundy, Studd, and Heenan, the action revolved exclusively around the Giant.

True to form, Heenan never once tagged into the ring, allowing his

twin towers of destruction to handle Andre. An early double-team hurt the Giant and left him vulnerable to several cheap blows from Heenan, a move the Weasel would soon come to regret. As the crowd stomped their feet, Andre shook his head, shrugged off Hillbilly's tag and went to work.

A thundering forearm sent Studd head-first over the top rope, leaving Andre alone with the alien counte-

(Continued on page 58)

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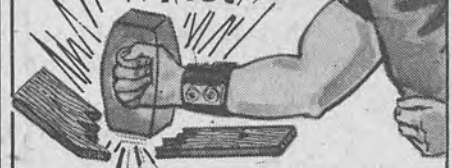
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ANDRE/BUNDY

(Continued from page 57)



Andre's eyes are closed as he delivers this chop as are Heenan's when he receives it. Neither man will see the blow, only the effects of it.

nance of Bundy. A shot to his widened girth doubled Bundy over and Andre followed up with a sonic report to Bundy's mouth. Bundy would not raise another fist this night.

With a lightning quickness, Andre whirled to the other side of the ring and yanked a terrified Heenan over the ropes. Holding him in check with one of his meaty paws, Andre choked and beat on the helpless weasel. If it weren't for the intervention of Hillbilly Jim, Andre might have committed murder this night, his usually peaceful nature utterly consumed by months of rage.

While Andre's locks sat enshrined in his rumpus room, Boyle became earnest in his praise. "I'm just glad that a warrior like Andre got his chance," he said. "Andre has always given his best for the fans. Now he can rest easy. He got his revenge. Although I know this won't keep him satisfied. He'll want more. It's funny. I feel like I know the guy." □

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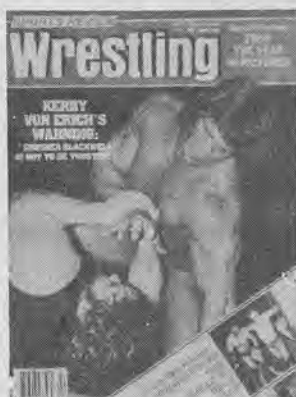
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(Continued from page 10)

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(Continued on page 64)

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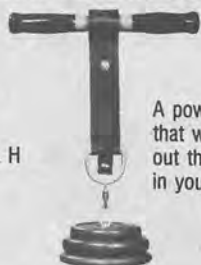
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DRESSING ROOM DOOR

(Continued from page 62)

shots, but I would get mine soon. Then I was told that there was too much controversy surrounding my father and Roddy Piper and that I would have to wait for that to die down first."

Bruno Sammartino's resurgence must have privately been the ultimate frustration for David. When Bruno returned to the WWF, he had no intention of being anything but a TV commentator. It wouldn't take long for David to know that would change. "He worked out together in the gym and ran together in Pittsburgh and I knew he was in better shape than he was when he was World champion. He could still whip just about anybody around, and believe me, he had offers."

David remembers his second appearance in Madison Square Garden in October 1984 as a turning point in both his career and his father's. In David's Garden debut a month earlier against Moondog Spot, his father came out to ringside to watch the match and report on it for the February 1985 issue of our sister publication *Sports Review Wrestling*. Not wanting to steal the thunder from his son, Bruno kept a very low profile that night. David was so impressive against Spot that the next month he was given an unexpected chance to wrestle Ken Patera, then the number-three ranked wrestler in the WWF. His career was most certainly taking off. Bruno, feeling that his son had already established himself, gave in to the demands of 20,000 people and came into the ring to give a wave before the match.

"You wrote it in your column, Stu, and it was true," David said. "You could see from the look in his eyes when the crowd chanted his name that he was going to be back in the ring again."

David won't admit that his father's presence in the WWF hurt



David Sammartino's feud with Larry Zbyszko is expected to reignite in the AWA.

his career. But he won't deny that the opponents he was given after that night in the Garden didn't approach the level of Ken Patera. And he certainly can't deny that leaving the WWF will give his career a shot in the arm.

If any of you follow ice hockey, you probably have heard about the New York Islanders' Denis Potvin, the all-time leading scorer among defensemen. When Denis was playing his last year as an amateur at age 19, it was obvious that he would be the first player chosen in the drafts of both the National Hockey League and the fledgling World Hockey Association. The Islanders, who had the worst record in the NHL and would be receiving the first pick, did not want to lose Potvin to the WHA. While Potvin was finishing his last amateur season, the Islanders made a trade for his older brother, Jean. Although Jean was a competent defenseman, the real reason the Islanders acquired him was to try to lure his younger brother.

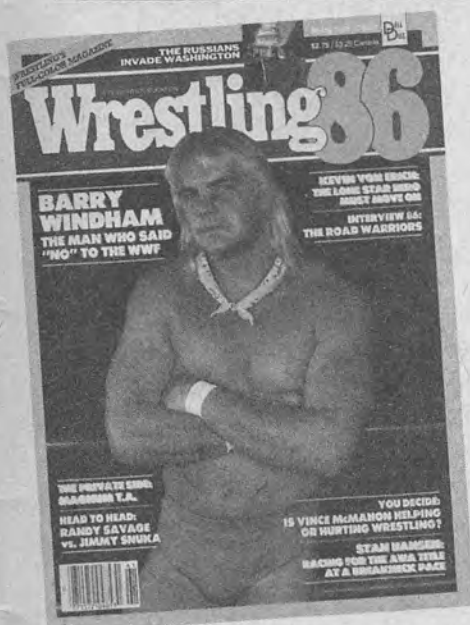
If David was signed by the WWF as a means to lure Bruno out of retirement, he has a right to feel used. David has too much pride to take advantage of the fact that Bruno Sammartino is his father. He deserves the same in return. □

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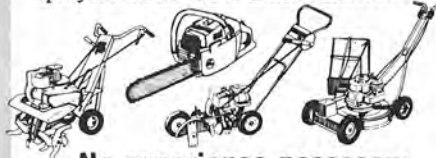
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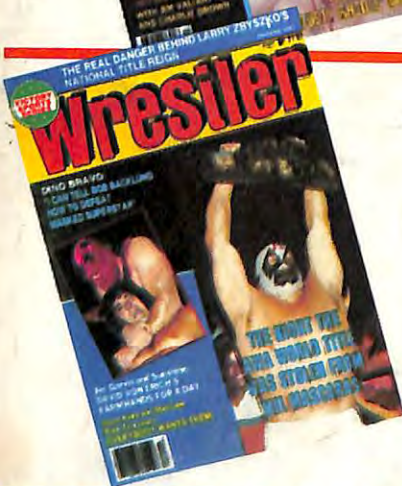
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